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INDIAN JIM:

A TALE OF

THE MINNESOTA MASSACRE.

BY EDWARD S. ELLIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MINERS," "THE WHITE TRACKER," "BESS, THE TRAPPER," "OLD KENT, THE RANGER," ETC.

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INDIAN JIM.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE RIVER.

On a burning day in August, 1862, a little steamer was plowing its way up the muddy waters of the Minnesota. Crowded together upon it were men, women, and children, boxes, barrels, bundles, and the thousand and one inseparable accompaniments of the emigrant and traveler. The boat's deck was densely crowded with its human freight, each person eager for a view of the country through which they were passing.

There was the cold, calculating speculator, whose eyes kindled with admiration, as they rested upon the rich sweep of prairie, or the exuberant wood-land. There were the pale-faced invalid; the animated, excitable Frenchman; the overbearing, but honest-minded Englishman; the thoughtful, phlegmatic German; the yellow haired, resolute Scotchman, and even the ebon-skinned African, then popularly termed the "contraband." In short, the steamer was the world in miniature, a focus of its passions, its prejudices, its hates and loves.

Near the stern of the boat stood two individuals, upon whom the glowing panorama seemed to make but a slight impression. The first was a young man, rather tall in stature, and with some claims to good looks. A small Panama hat sat jauntily upon his head, while the linen "duster," slightly thrown back by the left hand resting in the upper part of the trousers pocket, disclosed a heavy gold chain, from which dangled several seals and ornaments. Underneath the right arm rested a portfolio, within which were a score or more of sketches of prairie and mountain scenery, clever specimens of art. The owner was Adolphus Halleck, an artist, journeying up the Minnesota River, partly for the purpose of filling his portfolio with more of these drawings and sketches. Bierstadt's glorious pictures of Rocky Mountain life and scenery

had filled his soul with the desire to see and hear more of the mighty West, of its mountains, prairies, lakes, waterfalls, game, savage tribes, etc.

The light-colored whiskers covering the cheeks of the artist, together with his mild blue eyes, set off his pale complexion to advantage. The young man was a "fashionable," well aware of his prepossessing appearance; still he was not a "snob," nor a "spooney," but possessed the sterling qualities of the true gentleman.

The young lady directly before him, and over whose head he was calmly looking at the bank, as it glided by, was a lively creature, with sparkling eyes, animated features, with a somewhat mischievous expression. Evidently she was one of those buoyant spirits who seem born to act as a condiment to society. The relation which the two bore to each other was that of cousin.

"Yes Marian, I expect when I return this autumn, I shall have sufficient sketches to keep me occupied for the next half dozen years," said the young gentleman, gazing directly at a long stretch of prairie immediately before him.

"The scenery around us, I suppose you hardly consider worth an effort of your pencil."

"I don't know about that. Just yonder is quite a passable landscape. I have seen poorer ones at the Academy. If there were only a group of Indians to fill up the background, it would make quite a picture."

"You still retain your old admiration for the savages?"

"Fully. I have admired them, ever since, when a boy, I pored over the enchanting pages of the Leatherstocking Tales; and I have longed to see them, 'face to face,' in their native wilds, in the majestic loneliness of the mountains and forests, where they are uncontaminated by contact with the white man."

"You will have abundant opportunity to witness the pure red-man himself. But let me say, coz, that these poetical ideas of yours will disappear as rapidly as the snow flake upon the river."

The artist smilingly shook his head.

"It is too deep-seated to be removed' as suddenly as that. I do not deny but there are vagabonds and scoundrels among

them ; but you will find such among the most civilized. I contend that the Indians, *as a race*, are high-souled, brave, and chivalrous ; above even ourselves, in such qualities."

"And I say they are a treacherous, merciless, repulsive people, who are no more fit to live than tigers. At any rate, those in Minnesota are such. There, now."

The student quietly smiled at the excited manner of his fair companion, adding, after a moment's pause :

"Well, Marian, you know more of the Minnesota Indians than I do ; but I think you have taken your ideas from those who hang around the settlements. If you would only go a few hundred miles further into the woods, you would soon change your opinion of them."

"Change my opinion ! Go a few hundred miles further into the woods !" repeated the young lady, in half-amused scorn. "I can only wonder that any whites can bring themselves to live in the country. I know what that provoking smile of yours means," said Marian, laughing in spite of herself. "You mean to inquire why it is that I have been out here all summer. I can promise you that when I return home to Cincinnati, this autumn, you will never see me west of the Mississippi again. It is only because I promised to make Uncle John the visit, and he is so kind, that you know it would not do to hurt his feelings."

"Uncle John Brainerd," as he was termed, was no relative of either of the individuals before us. He was a companion from boyhood to the father of Marian Allondale, the children of whom habitually spoke of him as uncle. He had removed to Minnesota in 1856, and extorted a promise from every member of Mr. Allondale's family to meet him in his western home, as soon as he was fairly established. The father and mother, and several children, married and unmarried, had made this visit ; so that all, with the exception of Marian, the youngest, had kept their promise. In June, 1862, Mr. Allondale took this child to St. Paul. There she was placed upon the steamboat, and sent up the river to the landing, where Uncle John met and took her to his home, with the understanding that she was to spend the summer with him.

Very pleasantly the weeks wore away in his beautiful western home. Marian corresponded regularly with her

cousin in New York, whom, ever since her earliest recollection, she had been taught to look upon as her future husband. In fact, there was a tacit understanding between the two, that at some period (neither had ever attempted to tell precisely when) they were to assume the relation of man and wife. The fathers of both were merchants of considerable wealth, and each had given all his children a most liberal education. Adolphus had graduated at Yale, with the supposition that he was to take up the study of the law; but from youth he had evinced quite a talent for drawing, and a decided distaste for law. While in college, he sent home numerous sketches of such a ludicrous nature, that they could not fail to amuse his parents. His father took not a little pride in these efforts. Accordingly, when the son announced his intention of becoming an artist, the parent interposed no objection, only venturing to express the hope that his boy would accomplish something creditable.

When the war broke out, young Halleck started off as a "special artist," for one of the illustrated papers; but in the first engagement which he attempted to sketch, he was taken prisoner by an officer of the enemy, who had been a classmate with him in Yale. On being released, he returned home with the resolve henceforth to keep clear of the army, even if "drafted."

The glowing description of the scenery of Minnesota, which he continually received from his cousin, Marian, finally induced him to make a journey to the West. This journey was effected by easy stages, so that it was full two months before he reached St. Paul. It so happened that Marian had visited the capital a few days before, in order to meet her brother, and, on her return, embarked on the same boat which bore her artist cousin. The latter was expected by Uncle John sometime during the summer, although neither he nor Marian could fix upon the precise date to look for his coming.

They met as two old friends, without embarrassment or reserve. After a half hour's familiar chat, Adolphus showed her the sketches taken on his way thither; and then, taking the position in which we introduce them to the reader, they began a conversation, a portion of which we have already given.

"I gather from your letters that Uncle John is doing well out here," remarked the artist, without making a pause the tenth part as long as we have.

"Quite well, indeed. Do you know we all doubted very much the wisdom of his emigrating, when he made his failure, a few years ago? Father offered to advance him money and assist him in business again; but he was fully resolved to go. He said he was not too young to begin life again, although he is considerably over fifty years of age, and every one of his seven children is married, with the exception of Will and Maggie."

"Let me see, it is some time since I've seen Maggie. She must be quite a girl. And Will, too; he was in fact a man a couple of years ago."

"Maggie is nearly eighteen; and her brother is four years older."

Naturally, and all unconsciously, Adolphus looked full in the face of his companion as he spoke, and was surprised to see her mischievous eyes instantly drop to the ground, while the slightest carnation tinged her cheeks. She strove to conceal her agitation and almost succeeded. But an idea had entered the head of the artist, and he determined to follow it up.

"I believe Uncle John took the piano with him."

"Oh, yes; Maggie could not content herself without it. It is a source of great pleasure to her."

"I am sure they ought to feel quite satisfied. They are in comfortable circumstances, and their prospects are very good indeed. Does Will intend to remain there and follow in the footsteps of his father?"

"I do not know."

"I thought perhaps he had told you."

Again that direct look, right into the face of Marian, and again that blush and falling of the eyes. The artist had learned enough. He looked off dreamily down the river and kept his eyes there as he continued the conversation.

"Will Brainerd is a fine fellow; never will make an artist though. Did he pass through college?"

"Nearly two years ago."

"What a fine soldier he would make. Our army needs such men, too."

"Will is a discharged soldier. He came very near his death at the first battle of Bull Run. He is barely recovered from the wound he received in that engagement."

"Too bad; who was his commander—Stonewall Jackson or Beauregard?"

"Adolphus Halleck!"

The artist, with a laugh, ducked his head to escape the parasol of his indignant cousin.

"Here, Marian, take my cane; you might break that toad stool."

"What do you mean by such a question?"

"Nothing, I assure you, only—"

She braved his steady, tantalizing look this time, although it was a desperate task for her to do so.

"Never mind," he finally added, with the same quiet smile. "The young man is an honorable fellow, and I am the last person who would say aught against him. But to come back to our old topic—the savage. Will I see enough of them while I am at Uncle John's?"

"That depends altogether upon the number that will satisfy you. Every one that I see, is just as many more than I wish. They are straggling around the country, and you will come upon them at every turn."

"I shall then be able to secure a portrait or two."

"One portrait will answer for all. Take one of the worst looking vagabonds from the streets of New York, make him the color of a dirty copper cent, let his hair grow long, and dye it a jet black; then dress him up in nasty blanket, and you have a genuine Minnesota Indian."

"And are the women the same?"

"The women! the portrait will answer just as well for the *squaws*!"

"Are we then:

'In the land of the Dacotah,

In the land of handsome women,'

that Longfellow speaks about in such glowing terms in his *Hiawatha*?"

"I presume this is the country to which he refers. What a pity that he did not visit it before he wrote that poem!"

"I will make an exception to those I have described," said

Marian, as if conscious that her denunciation had been too sweeping. "The *Christian* Indians are somewhat different. They have laid aside their savage dress, manners, and customs, and adopted those of civilization, and are passable beings. I have seen numbers of these, and it may be that their contrast to their more savage brethren inclines me to speak in their favor. There are Chaskie, Paul, and several others, whose example might well be imitated by our own people."

"You will admit, then, that there are some human beings among them?"

"Most certainly, I will. There is one in particular who visits Uncle John's occasionally. He is known as 'Christian Jim,' and I must say he is a noble fellow. I would not be afraid to trust my life in that fellow's hands at any time."

"And do you not think, Marian, seriously speaking, that these same red-men, whom you decry, would be vastly better if it were not for the influence of the white men, these traders and agents?"

"I can not deny it. It is almost impossible for the missionaries to accomplish any thing, with the machinations of these vile persons to contend against. What noble, self-denying servants of the cross! There is Dr. Williamson, who has been laboring for years among them, encountering death, and perils worse than death, all for the sake of instructing them in the right way to heaven. And there is Mr. Riggs, also, who located himself twenty-five years ago at Lake *Lao qui Park*, or Iyedan, as we call it. Even now, it is on the outskirts of civilization, away up at the headwaters of this river, so that you may well imagine what it was at that time. Well, he had his house burned down about his head and was thankful to God that the life of himself and his dear ones were spared."

"I suppose he got sick of the missionary business, and went into something else."

"Not he. He would be a poor missionary if he did. He is still at work among them, and will probably continue there until his death. He is not the only one. In many a lonely wild, where his existence is scarcely known except among those for whom he is so faithfully laboring is the Indian missionary, devoted and fearless in his Master's good work."

"I declare, Marian, you are becoming enthusiastic. How would you like to be a missionary's wife?"

"It would be the highest position I think I could ever attain in this world."

"An Indian missionary's wife?"

"Almost any thing but that. Weak, erring mortal that I am, I am afraid I could never become a teacher of these savages."

"Now, if you only had the enthusiasm that I have, you might commence business upon your own hook, without waiting to become a wife."

"Pshaw! I have no patience with you—"

"Just notice how the scenery is changing. I do believe I will take a sketch," said the artist, opening his portfolio, and producing his pencil, preparatory to commencing his task.

"You will not have time, cousin. Just look up the beach yonder, about a quarter of a mile ahead. Do you see a wagon there by the landing? It has but one horse attached, and a young man standing close by the animal's head."

The artist deliberately arranged his eye-glass, and gazed for several moments up stream, before replying.

"I believe I do see some such an establishment as you speak of. Who is the proprietor, Uncle John?"

"Yes; but I think it is Will, waiting for me. A short lively ride over the prairie, and we shall be at our journey's end."

CHAPTER II.

FIRESIDE STORIES.

AFTER considerable backing, turning, throwing off, and securing of rope, the little steamer sunk to rest, the plank was run out, and Adolphus assisted Marian to the shore.

"Ah, Will! how are you, old boy?"

A robust young man, embrowned by sun and exposure, came doubtfully forward, as if uncertain whether he had been addressed or not.

"Why, Will, don't you know your cousin, Adolphus?" laughingly asked Marian.

"Ha! ha! those side whiskers were what I didn't recognize. How do you do, Halleck? I am glad indeed to see you. You are doubly welcome to our home."

"Don't doubt it in the least; wouldn't come, if I hadn't thought so. And how you have changed, Will! Why you're a *man*. I've had my spy-glass leveled at you for the last ten minutes, and I am sure I would never have suspected your identity, had it not been for Marian, here, who couldn't talk of any thing else—"

"Oh! check your nonsense! I've threatened to break my parasol over your head a half dozen times, already; and I shan't withhold the punishment much longer."

"Use my cane, when you must come to it."

The artist assisted his cousin into the wagon, then followed with valise and band-box, until all the baggage was safely stowed away.

"I say, Will, take a seat beside me and let her drive, if she can be persuaded to do so. It will take both her hands to do that, and then perhaps I may get a chance to talk a few moments in peace. Does she know any thing about driving?"

"I can teach *you*," said Marian, saucily, as she took up the reins, and Will Brainerd laughingly seated himself behind her, upon the seat by the artist.

"I suppose you esteem yourself a great ——, heaven save me!"

The short jerk on the rein started the spirited animal so suddenly, that the artist's head struck the bottom of the wagon, at the same moment that his feet shot up in the air. Recovering himself as best he could, he reseated himself, and undertook to converse with his friend beside him. But the fair driver, to use the artist's own expression, seemed resolved on "letting him out," and he found it necessary to shout at the top of his voice to make himself heard at all, while he was also compelled to hold on with both hands to save himself from being pitched out of the wagon altogether.

They had gone perhaps a mile or so, when the portfolio flew open, its contents streamed out, some falling in the

road and some beside it. Full fifteen minutes were occupied in collecting and disposing of them, when all were seated and dawning rapidly forward again.

By this time it was getting dark, and they had journeyed several miles.

"I suppose we shall reach Uncle John's before morning?" asked the artist, as he was nearly unseated by the passage of one of the wheels over an obstruction.

"Oh! yes; we are already within a mile or two of the house. Look ahead, a little to the left. You see a light glimmering?"

"Yes; very plainly."

"That is our house, and we shall soon be there."

"Hadn't you better take the ribbons? I really fear—really fear that the *horse* will be injured."

"I have charge of the horse, and shall continue to have charge until I set you down at the gate."

"Well, Marian, let me affectionately advise you to begin to hold in, else we may pass a half mile or so beyond the house. I was driving a lady friend out in the Central Park this summer, and, because I didn't *hold in* soon enough, I went straying across one of those grass plots, broke the wagon, and was fined twenty dollars, besides smashing up five hundred dollars worth of dry goods."

The house of "Uncle John Brainerd," although standing in the State of Minnesota, was originally constructed in the State of Ohio. Transported to the West, upon reaching its destination, it arose somewhat after the fashion of Solomon's Temple. It served well for a year or two, when it was voted altogether too small and inconvenient. Several additions were made from time to time, until, at the present period, it had reached quite imposing dimensions. The outbuildings had also kept pace with the growth of the mansion itself, until, at the time of which we speak, the estate had a comfortable and thrifty appearance, exceedingly inviting to the wearied traveler or the aborigine, at liberty to indulge his natural propensities.

Through the gloom, a figure loomed up—a man in a broad-brimmed hat and in his shirt-sleeves—leaning forward upon the gate, in the attitude of a person who was waiting. The approaching horse was barely descried, when this man saw

that three persons occupied his wagon, and he instantly suspected their identity.

"Whoa, Dolly, whoa!" and he stepped quietly forth and took the horse by the bridle. "Is that you, Adolphus?"

"Tell me whether you have a firm hold of the horse before I reply. Yes, it's I, Uncle John, come to see you."

"And glad, indeed, I am; jump out; run right in the house—give us your hand—here's your valise; run on in. I'll be there as soon as I put away Dolly."

The three travelers—if young Brainerd may be classed as such—were not slow to follow his invitation, where they met a most cordial greeting from the lady-like, genial Mrs. Brainerd. Maggie had left the piano upon hearing their approach, and sprung forward to meet her brother and friend Marian; but she shrunk back upon encountering a stranger. It was not until his name was pronounced that she recognized in him the playmate of her childhood. The artist held out his hand, and greeted her in his free, off-hand manner, that tended much to dispel her embarrassment.

"We waited supper for you," said Uncle John, entering the door, "and it is not necessary to ask you whether you have any appetites."

"It will not take me long to demonstrate that fact to you," said Halleck, laughingly. "Marian here, has given me such a shaking that I lost my appetite altogether for a time; but it is slowly returning again."

It was a bountiful meal before which they all sat, and there were keen appetites that insured justice being done it. Uncle John abounded with sly humor, and was one of those exceptional persons who could tell a funny story without even as much as smiling at it himself. Young Brainerd, modest and manly, inherited the same fun-loving propensity, but it was more upon the surface, and more demonstrative in its character. Mrs. Brainerd, mild and dignified, merely smiled, and, when her own family exhibited undue elation in their manner, interposed a quiet reproof, which, it must be confessed, had little effect upon her husband. Young Maggie was modest and retiring, scarcely speaking, except when directly appealed to, although Halleck, in his free, self-posessed manner, occasionally succeeded in winning a remark from her. Nothing

could keep down Marian's spirit; her tongue was irrepressible, and, take it all in all, the company were happy, and enjoying themselves exceedingly.

The evening, although in August, was quite cool—in fact, so much so that it was remarked by several.

"It is only the pure air of these Western prairies," said Brainerd, in answer to Halleck; "we frequently have such nights in midsummer. You have escaped those sweltering days of the cities that are enough to scorch one to death."

"I haven't avoided all of them; for June and July, partly in New York and Philadelphia, have given me an experience already."

"Now that you are with us," said Uncle John, "you might as well remain through the winter. You will then get a taste of cold weather, such as you have never seen the other side of the Mississippi."

"I see that you are disposed to claim a superiority for this country in every respect; but, if you expect any colder weather than we have out East, I shall be very anxious to leave before winter."

"Cold weather! you should have been here last winter. Poll, there, won't forget that very soon. What do you think of a man's eyes freezing shut, and huge icicles forming on his nose if he but opened the door to get a mouthful of fresh air?"

"I should consider it quite a remarkable occurrence if any such thing ever took place."

"Wife, there, will never forget it. I mean the week that one of our pigs got out of the pen, and I undertook to drive him back. I noticed that he walked oddly, as though he were getting lame. Pretty soon he stopped, with a grunt, and I couldn't move him an inch; undertook to shove him along, and found he had frozen stiff as a rock, in his tracks and couldn't budge. Howsumever, he thawed out in February, and came back into the pen of his own accord."

"How long did he remain standing in his tracks?"

"Hardly a week was it Polly?"

"Why, John—"

"You remember Maggie undertook to play the 'Star Spangled Banner,' but when she struck the keys, not a sound

would come out; but when we got the fire up, it thawed the notes, so that the whole tune came out, after a while, from the piano. It was the same day that the quicksilver sunk so low that it went clear through the bottom of the thermometer, and has never come up again. Yes, 'Dolphus, every winter we have a cold snap like that."

"There is little danger, then, of my remaining to see one of your Western winters. How do the Indians stand such weather?"

"I knew cousin could not keep off that subject much longer," laughed Marian. "I have been expecting some such question every minute."

"How do they stand it? Did you ever hear of an Indian freezing to death? That was the winter Christian Jim called here, on his return from a hunt. The fellow actually had barely enough clothes on him to keep us from blushing when he spoke to us; and when wife asked him whether he felt cold, he just grinned and wiped the sweat off his brow."

"I should like to see that Indian. What tribe does he belong to?" demanded the artist, with considerable animation.

"The Sioux. They are all around us."

"Splendid set of people, ain't they? Noble, chivalrous, and handsome."

For the first time in the evening, Uncle John indulged in an audible laugh, and even good Mrs. Brainerd could not forbear a smile. As for Marian, her mirth was uncontrollable for a few moments.

"What's the matter?" asked the artist, a little nettled at the manner in which his question had been received.

"Three months from now, you will laugh as heartily as us," replied Mrs. Brainerd, hastening to explain any misunderstanding. "The poetry and romance of your ideas will undergo a most speedy change in a few weeks."

"Confound it, so Marian told me on the boat. I thought I was going far enough West to get acquainted with the genuine red-man."

"So you have; you will see the pure specimen in these parts, and one sight of him will be amply sufficient."

"I should like to take the likeness of a dozen or so of their most distinguished chiefs. I heard the name of Little Crow

mentioned when I was in St. Paul. I wonder whether I shall ever be able to take him."

"It's more likely that he would take you, if the chance were given him, for if there ever was an incarnate villain, that same savage is he."

"What has he ever done to earn such a reputation?"

"Not a great deal, as yet, it is true," returned young Braizerd, "but he is just the man who—"

The speaker paused abruptly, as he encountered the sharp, reproving look of his father, who gave a vigorous "*ahem!*" to attract his attention. Despite the effort made by each to conceal this little telegram, and its results, it was noted and observed by every one at the table, although but one or two suspected its true significance. The artist, noticing the embarrassment, hastened to relieve it, by remarking:

"It has struck me that Uncle Abe might get a good General or two from the red-men. No doubt there is many a Philip, Pontiac and Tecumseh among the aborigines, who could lead our armies on to victory and peace. I tell you, friends, you needn't laugh, for these same savages have run."

"No doubt Albert Pike has discovered that long since," replied Uncle John, "and it strikes me that if we could refuse the offer of the Comanches in the Mexican war, we can dispense with the services of those other tribes in this rebellion."

"You are all leagued against me, and it is useless to talk with you. Maggie, can you not take my part?"

The girl thus unexpectedly appealed to, blushed slightly as she responded:

"I would be glad to do so, Mr. Hallock. I once shared your views, but it required only a short residence here to dispel them. I am afraid there is little romance in this western life of ours."

"I will talk no more with you, when not one of you will be my friend. Uncle John, what kinds of game does Minnesota produce?"

"Every kind—from a grizzly bear down to an ant."

"You don't pretend to say any of those shaggy monsters are found in this section?"

"What do you mean—ants?"

"No; the grizzly bear."

"They are rarely found up among the mountains; we quite often meet with the other species on the prairies. It was only week before last, that Maggie was picking berries, and, before she knew, came right upon one."

"You don't say!" exclaimed Halleck, in consternation. "What did he do?"

"I don't know which was the most frightened, the bear or the girl. They both ran, at the top of their speed, from each other. By the way, 'Dolphus, how would you like a piece of cooked bear's meat?"

"Don't mention it. I would rather eat a mule or a horse."

"They *have* a rather odd taste; there is no question about *that*."

"I should think they would, indeed. We might expect the same of any unclean animal. Fancy me making a meal out of Sampson, that we have in New York, the grizzly that was the cause of old Grizzly Adams' death."

"You will soon get used to the Indians, and would soon acquire a relish for bear steak."

"Mrs. Brainerd, I will thank you for a small piece of that meat. I am unusually hungry to-night," said the artist, and then, addressing Uncle John again:

"It seems impossible to agree upon any thing. I do not doubt but what I shall become accustomed to some things: but there are others, such as eating bear's meat, which—get out."

"Don't you imagine, now, if it were well cooked, and placed before you," asked young Brainerd, with a quiet smile, "that you might digest a portion?"

"If I were a Digger Indian, I suppose I might; but as I am not, the thing is altogether out of the question."

"Do you think you could tell the taste of the article?" pursued Uncle John, to whom the subject seemed one of peculiar pleasure, "if you should taste it without being told."

"Do I know the taste of Croton, or of aqua-fortis? Do you suppose I could put a drop upon my tongue without being conscious of it?"

"Let me help you to a little more of this meat," said Mrs. Brainerd, in her mild, persuasive tones, as she reached for the *order's* plate.

"I believe I shall have to do so. I am extremely fond of it, or else I am immoderately hungry."

"Not at all—not at all; a man that doesn't find an appetite in this country would be a phenomenon," said Uncle John. "You are sure then that you couldn't go a mouthful of bear-steak?"

"Not an atom for a million dollars in greenbacks."

"Do you relish the meat you are eating?"

"There is no need of asking that question. What is it—beef?"

"Yes; *that is beef from a black bear!*"

"Ah-oo-ah!" gasped the artist, rising hurriedly from the table and making a rush for the door, amid the shouts and screams of laughter of his friends.

CHAPTER III.

THE VISIT, AND THE CAUSE OF IT.

THE night proved one of the most beautiful in August. The moon was near its full, and the air was of that soft coolness which makes mere existence a pleasure. At the close of the evening meal, Maggie had seated herself at the piano, and sung a song or two at the earnest request of the artist, after which the light was extinguished, and all took their seats upon the long porch that extended one-half the length of the house. Halleck and young Brainerd enjoyed their Havanas, while Uncle John declined the proffered cigar, and confined himself to his well-blackened "sweet-brier." The arrangement of their position was such, that Halleck was at the extreme end of the porch, while Maggie and Marian were between him and young Brainerd.

The stillness of the night was so perfect, that although some of the party were considerably separated, an ordinary tone sufficed for a general conversation; still, while Marian and Brainerd, and the others rattled on in their usual manner, Halleck confined his conversation exclusively to Maggie, who sat within a few feet of him.

"Marian has told me something," said he, "of an Indian—Sioux, I believe, who is a great friend to your family."

"Christian Jim, I suppose, you mean."

"That is the name. Do you know where he is?"

"I can not tell; he makes his home near the Lower Agency, but he is a very frequent visitor at our house. Some years ago, before he was converted, father saved him from injury, when he was in a drunken quarrel, and he has never forgotten it. I doubt whether he loves the missionaries more than he does us."

"A true Indian never forgets a kindness nor an injury either. What sort of a fellow is this?"

"He, I should say, is your personification of a red-man, except perhaps in his appearance. He is all that is noble and good, but at the same time, he is as homely as the rest of his race."

Maggie Brainerd was somewhat surprised at the fluency with which she maintained her part of the conversation; but Adolphus Halleck's extensive experience had secured to him that delightful art of placing any person at ease in his presence. Besides this, the most awkward and reserved being in the world, can converse in the moonlight. There is an indescribable influence in it, that is perceptible to us all.

And moonlight, too, is like a fairy veil thrown over the rugged, disproportional outlines, softening down the harsh expression, smoothing out the wrinkles of time, and giving a mellow beauty to the plain and homely. Adolphus Halleck, with his hat resting in his lap, one leg carelessly thrown over another, leaning back in his chair and leisurely smoking his cigar, was a picture that possessed many prepossessing points. His high forehead, fair skin, and even features, were genuinely handsome, under the magic touch of the moonbeams. And, as he in turn, gazed down, into the youthful face beside him, and occasionally caught the dark eyes upturned to his, he could but admire the sweet, blooming health of the girl, and her ingenuous simplicity of manner. The most accomplished heroine with whom he had ever flirted, had never afforded him more pure pleasure than he experienced as he sat *tête-à-tête* with Maggie Brainerd.

"I should like very much to see this Jim that you re-

to," he added in reply to her last remark. "I suppose they term him *Christian* on account of his profession."

"More perhaps because his walk and life accords with it. When father first met him, he was a very bad man. He was drunken and quarrelsome, and it has been said that he had murdered more than one white man. He came from the upper portion of Minnesota, where the traders have always encountered great danger."

"But he is completely changed."

"So completely indeed, that I believe he literally considers himself another person. You see he has taken an English name. A few years ago, I suppose his greatest passion was for strong drink. To obtain that, he would sell the blanket from his back. Since then, he has been subject to the strongest kind of temptation, but has never yielded, and declares that he has no taste at all for any such thing."

"A remarkable being. Then you'll admit, Miss Maggie, that I am not entirely mistaken in my estimate of Indian character?" said the artist, turning with a smile toward the girl beside him.

"It is not the Indian that is thus, but the *Christian*."

This pointed remark, was the most complete refutation that Halleck had received, and he felt its force more than if it had been expounded to him by the commanding general of this department. His admiration for the girl kept him silent a moment, and then he added:

"And yet you will not deny that there have been savages, who never embraced Christianity, that have been as noble and chivalrous as the one of whom we are speaking."

"No doubt of it, but many as I have seen, I have never as yet met such a person—heigho! yonder comes Jim, this minute."

The gate at this point opened, and the artist saw a bare-headed figure shrouded in a blanket from the shoulders to the feet, walk toward the porch. A glance convinced him that he was an Indian, while his easy unhesitating gaze showed that he stood upon the familiar footing of a friend. As he came forward, he spoke in a deep, guttural, and not unpleasant voice, "Good evening."

Several responded to his salutation, and without further

ado he seated himself upon the porch, nigh to Uncle John and Marian. He accepted the pipe proffered by the former, and seemed at once absorbed in the pleasure which it yielded to him, while the conversation was principally resumed as though it had suffered no interruption.

Adolphus Halleck could not conceal the interest he felt in this being; in fact, it was so evident to those around, that it afforded all considerable amusement. He ceased conversing with Maggie, and gazed intently at him.

The position of the Sioux was such, that his left side and a portion of his back was turned toward him. Although it was an August night, he still retained his blanket to his shoulders, oblivious as much to heat as to cold. The moonlight was not sufficient to reveal distinctly the countenance of the Indian; but in the ardor of his enjoyment, the fire within the bowl of the pipe glowed like a burning coal, and illuminated at intervals his whole face with its glare. At such times, the artist saw the short upper lip, finely-curved Roman nose, the beetling brows, angular contour of the face, and low forehead, around which hung a mass of black wiry hair that hung below his shoulders.

The description already given of Christian Jim's character, had strongly prepossessed Halleck in his favor; and this, united with his romantic idea of the American aborigines as a class, made him the all-absorbing object of the young man's attention. Leaning forward in his chair, he keenly scrutinized him for some ten minutes, totally unmindful of the smothered titter he occasioned, or of the fact that his segar had entirely died out in his fingers. A broader intimation than usual, however, from Marian, recalled him to his senses, and drawing a match from his pocket, and tipping back in his chair again, he said:

"Has he been on a hunt?"

"August is not the season for hunting."

"Where then did you procure that bear's meat?"

It was obtained by accident, and kept so long as we could safely keep it in this weather, specially for you. I say, Jim?"

"Hoo!" The bronzed face shot round as if on a pivot, and confronted the girl.

"You are going to stay here all night?"

"Dunno—mebbe so," and the head shot back again, and the vigorous whiffs of the pipe were resumed as before.

"There is something on his mind, I think," said Maggie, "for he is generally a little talkative for the first fifteen minutes he is with us."

"Perhaps it is the presence of others that checks him."

"It is not that, for he knows you are our friend, by your being here."

"There is no telling the ways of an Indian, and I suppose this one has his eccentricities and contradictions, in common with his race."

The evening by this time was considerably advanced, and at a gentle intimation from Mrs. Brainerd, that the time for the two ladies to retire had come, Uncle John arose and invited all within the house. The dying lamp instantly flamed up, and all arranged themselves comfortably in seats around the room.

It was noticeable how changed was the manner of the head of the family. His humorous disposition had entirely disappeared, and in its place was a grave, thoughtful expression, that showed he approached the duty before him, with a realizing sense of its import. Taking down the Bible, he looked inquiringly around the room.

"Where is Jim?"

"Still seated on the porch," replied young Brainerd. "Shall I invite him in?"

"By all means. He has been forgotten."

The young man stepped to the side of the Sioux, and addressed him in an undertone. He did not stir, however, from his position, and after a moment, the former returned.

"You must excuse him to-night."

Maggie, who was seated at the piano, struck a few chords, and the younger members of the party instantly gathered about her. Young Brainerd had a powerful and melodious bass voice, while that of Halbeck partook of the soft nature of the tenor; and, as they all united upon that beautiful hymn, "Sweet Hour of Prayers," from the "Golden Chain," the music filled the room and rolled far across the prairie. The piece finished, all took their seats again, while a chapter from

the Bible was read, when they knelt, as the fervent thanksgiving and supplication ascended to God.

At the termination of the devotional exercises, the female portion of the party bade the others good-night and retired; but the others remained. Halleck was resolved to learn more of the Sioux Indian before morning, while the father and son were prompted by the misgivings which they had entertained since he had made his appearance.

All waited until there was no probability of their being overheard by any within the house, and then they moved softly out upon the porch and seated themselves around the savage. The latter was still smoking at his pipe, and the same glare from its bowl illumined his countenance. He preserved the same dogged silence, until he was directly addressed by Uncle John.

"Jim, you are not yourself, to-night. Why did you not come in to prayers? You do not dislike to talk to the Great Spirit who guards you?"

"Talk to him all the time. Talk to him here, when you talk."

"But you have always been glad to join us before?"

"Didn't want women to see me. Jim feel bad."

"What is the cause of it?"

"White trader bad man—make Sioux Indian cross—steal his blanket—cheat him out of money."

"He has always been so."

"Injin bad too—tired ob it—killin' all settlers."

"What do you mean?" gasped the father.

"Burn down buildings at the Agency—kill men, women, babies, take dere scalps."

"When did this happen?"

"Begin yesterday—burn yet—keep on tomahawkin'."

"God save us! and will they come here, Jim?"

"Dunno—guess not—too far from de Agency—'fraid ob soldiers."

"And have you seen this yourself?"

"Seen part—make Jim feel bad—too, tree Christians turn injin agin, and kill de white—feel bad—don't like to see it—come away."

"I pray heaven they may not come in this direction. Did

I dream there was the least danger here, we would start east instantly."

"Wouldn't it be best for all to take tickets to St. Paul on the steamer to-morrow?" asked Halleck, who betrayed considerable interest in the statement of the Indian.

"Should we leave the farm, it would be plundered by the thieving Indians, during our absence; and I cannot afford to lose what I have accumulated at this advanced period of my life."

"But, father, suppose our safety should demand it?"

"Then I should not hesitate a moment; but I do not fear any immediate danger. There may be an outbreak, for you know we had a hint the other day that such a thing might occur; but it can't spread to any extent before it must be put down."

"The savage is vengeful and furious when the devil within him is roused," remarked Halleck, who had lit another Havana, "but, as I contended at the tea-table, he has many chivalrous feelings, and, depend upon it, his warfare is always conducted upon an honorable basis. Christian Jim, won't you take a segar? I think they are preferable to a pipe."

"Don't want it," replied the savage, without moving his head.

"All right—no offense. Uncle John, I don't think there is any need of being frightened."

"There is danger—that much is certain; but, whether it hangs over us, is another thing. Didn't you hear any thing of trouble among the Indians, when you came up on the boat?"

"Since you've spoken of it, I call to mind that I did hear several speak of some outbreak that was feared on account of the annuities being held back; but I made up my mind they were only slandering the 'aboaryginis,' as my friend, Charley Browne (alias Artemus Ward) calls them. It does seem to me that all with whom I converse take it into their heads to libel the red-men."

"Ah! my boy, what a change of opinion you will undergo ere you are a year older," said young Brainerd, who appeared more affected by the news of the friendly Sioux than even his father was. "The legends that our forefathers have brought

down to us are exemplified in these same Minnesota Indians."

"Jim's information is pretty sure to be correct, and he would not knowingly deceive us," said Uncle John, without noticing the last remark, "so I shall leave the matter with him. Jim, do you think we had better leave to-night?"

The Indian did not reply for a moment or two. The whiffs came more vigorously than ever from his pipe, and his whole visage shone under the ghostly reflection. Finally he answered:

"No."

"When should we go?" asked young Brainerd.

"Dunno—can't tell; wait while—know more—den go—maybe stay."

"Shall we leave to-morrow?"

"Dunno; wait see; Jim tell."

"I think we may rest quietly to-night. At any rate, we are in God's hands, and he will do whatsoever seemeth best to him. I'm sorry, 'Dolphus, that your visit to us, which we calculated was going to give us so much pleasure, should be marred by such bad news."

"Don't take it to heart about me," replied the artist, tipping back his head, and leisurely ejecting the cigar smoke, first from one corner of his mouth, and then from the other. "I don't feel anxious in the least, and I don't intend to leave these premises till my visit is finished, just to show you that I have no fear of them. You know what my opinion of the American Indian is, I suppose. If you don't I can soon inform you."

"Experience alone will convince you," said John Brainerd.

"That is the truth, precisely. When I see some of those horrible doings of which I have heard so much, then I will believe the savage warrior is not all that my fancy painted him."

"I much fear—"

Uncle John paused abruptly, for, as he chanced to turn his head, he saw in the door behind, the white figure of his wife, her face of a deathly paleness.

"John, what is the meaning of this?"

The husband was so truthful a man to prevaricate, and he therefore replied :

"Polly, go to your room, and I will soon tell you all."

The wife stood irresolute a moment, as if doubtful whether to obey or not, but she finally turned and departed, with the injunction :

"Do not delay any longer, John."

So soon as she was beyond ear-shot, Uncle John said :

"Let us all retire ; it's got to be quite late, and there ain't any need of staying up any longer. Come, Jim."

"No ; must go," replied the Sioux.

"Can't you spend the night with us, my friend ?" inquired Halleck, in his off-hand, easy manner.

"Can't stay ; must go away," said the Indian, arising, and moving out the yard.

All three entered the house, and made their way to their separate apartments. As for Halleck, he didn't share, in any degree, the feelings of those around him. The days of merciless, massacre-loving Indians, he believed, had been gone for over a half century ; the idea of a massacre occurring in Minnesota, one of the immovable States of the Union, was an impossible absurdity, and he could but pity the apprehensive trembling of his friends around.

He had extinguished the light, and was upon the point of retiring, when he noticed a bright light shining on his window. Parting the curtains, he saw, far away on the horizon, the lurid glare of a conflagration. It was directly across the prairie, and so far away, that nothing beside the fiery red could be distinguished. While still gazing at it, the artist discovered a figure between him and the illumination, which loomed up, distinct and gigantic, against the blazing background. It was going toward the fire at a rapid gait, and the long blanket and ungainly walk showed that it was the friendly Sioux. Halleck watched him for a long time, until the Indian was but a mere twinkling speck against the horizon, and then, as he retired for the night, he muttered :

"That's a queer Dick, that friendly Sioux. I suppose the folks here will attribute that fire to the Indians, but I don't believe any such nonsense. They are too honorable and chivalrous."

CHAPTER IV.

A SKETCH AND SOMETHING ELSE.

No one of the settler's family, beside Halleck, saw the light of the conflagration, and he judged it best not to refer to it, as it would only serve to excite remarks which would evidently be the detriment of the abused American Indian, and he had already heard enough of such disparagements.

The next morning was one of the most beautiful that the month of August produces. Without giving evidence of a burning, sweltering atmosphere, it heralded a mild, pleasant day, during which existence would be quite bearable. The artist resolved to spend the forenoon in sketching, and invited Marian and Maggie to guide him upon his tour. Mrs. Brainerd, for some reason, judged it best to keep her daughter at home, and it thus happened that our first two acquaintances departed together, and alone.

No one was better qualified than Marian Allondale to act as a guide to the artist. During her visit in this western country, she had explored the woods and prairies, both alone and in company with others. She knew just where the finest views could be obtained, whether it should be a quiet landscape, a picturesque lake, or the wild sublimity of the mountains.

"And now, most excellent sir," said she, when they were fairly started, "upon what particular scene do you intend to employ your pencil?"

"Upon every one that presents itself."

"Do you propose to accomplish such a task as that to-day?"

"Oh, no! it will take weeks, perhaps months."

"I wish to know what sort of view you would like to take this forenoon."

"It makes little or no difference to me. I will leave the select or entirely to you."

"There is a gem of a lake—a perfect Geneva—just beyond that range of hills yonder. A large piece of woods runs north from it, and you cannot see it until you are directly upon

it. It is quite small, but I have often wished that I had your ability to transfer its likeness to paper."

"Guide me to that."

The two took a northward direction toward Lake Wita Chaw Tah. The one, however, of which they were in quest, lay to a considerable distance south, and it was not their intention, upon the present occasion, to proceed as far as the first mentioned sheet of water. Their journey was over a broken prairie, with here and there a grove of timber, until they reached a hilly piece of woods and rocks, through which they passed a few hundred yards, when they came to the destination of their trip.

It was an enchanting scene. The lake itself, as Marian expressed it, was a perfect gem, embedded in this wild solitude. Its northern shore consisted almost entirely of large boulders and rocks, thrown hither and thither, as if from the hands of sportive giants. Here and there a tiny stream rippled over them, falling upon the sandy beach below, and making its way into the placid bosom of the lake. Wild grasses and shrubbery set off to advantage the gray masses of stone, while here and there a bushy tree added variety and effect to the scene. The eastern, western and southern sides of the lake were fringed by a forest of considerable extent—not an ordinary, monotonous forest, but one diversified by gorges, glens and waterfalls, some of which were of no insignificant size.

The depths of the lake were of a clear, icy coldness, and the trees, and rocks, and waterfalls along its margin could not have been more distinctly reflected, had the sheet of water been a mirror. Occasionally, a ripple here and there, gave the images a fantastic, tremulous motion, but they gradually regained their natural shape and appearance again. Several birds, circling overhead, now and then swooped down to the surface, and then shot upward again, as if the touch of their wings to the glassy water, had filled them with an invigorating ecstasy. Add to all this an air of quiet seclusion, of cheerful solitude, and the picture is finished.

Halleck was delighted with the scene.

"I tell you," said he, enthusiastically, "Italy could not surpass this. It lacks but one thing—the element of life—to set off to greater advantage this death-like solitude."

Marian pointed to the birds overhead.

"Not that, exactly. I mean an element that harmonizes with the scene itself. We might put ourselves in the picture, but we should spoil it—we need life that is in keeping with this wild solitude; a deer, stooping to drink, on yonder margin, a grizzly bear, contemplating the scene from the high rock, or—"

"A wild Indian, paddling his canoe."

"Would be worth every thing else. A genuine Sioux warrior, in his war-paint, fierce as the furies, would complete my desires at present."

"I am sure you have pictured such a being in your imagination often enough to transfer him to paper."

"Yes; but you know, Marian, there is nothing like life itself."

"If I mistake not, yonder is an Indian canoe, this minute. Its position, however, is not the best in the world for sketching."

Marian pointed toward the upper part of the lake, at a clump of bushes that stood upon the very margin. At the base of these was visible an object which might have been a stone, end of a log, or the stern of an Indian canoe. If the latter, a hunter's eye would have seen a partial attempt at concealment, as if the savage owner preferred that no one beside himself should see it. Had such been his wish, a little more care would have made it invisible to the orb of an Indian himself; but what reason could a Minnesota savage have for concealing himself from another of his race? And it was hardly probable that any stray hunter or settler would note or take alarm, should he discover the frail vessel drawn beneath the bushes.

It required several minutes for the artist to deservy the object so carefully pointed out by his companion, and when he did so, he was so disappointed in its appearance, that he was reluctant to admit its being an Indian bark canoe.

"I am sure of it," she said, positively. "I have seen them before, and can not be mistaken. This canoe is a fac-simile of that that Darley has put in his 'Illustrated Cooper,' so that you may take the liberty of giving your friends a better view of it than we have ourselves."

"But where is the owner—the Indian himself? We can not get along without him?"

"He is lurking somewhere in the neighborhood. 'Dolph,' said the girl suddenly, "do you know we are not alone?"

"What? eh?" he asked, doubting what she meant.

"Look about a hundred yards to the west of that canoe, and tell me whether you can see any *element of life*, as you call it."

"There's a fellow taking it easy, sure as you live. Who can blame him for coming to such a delightful retreat to fish?"

The great wonder to our two friends was that they had not discovered this personage before. He was seated in full view upon a rock, with his feet hanging down, his elbows resting upon his knees, and his body bending forward in that stooping position, so frequently assumed by the professional angler. He held no rod in his hand, but his attitude showed that his whole attention was absorbed upon the line, the "sinker" of which they saw him swing around his head, and cast far out into the lake.

The artist began his task at once, while Marian took a position in which she could note the progress of the work. He chatted pleasantly as his pencil floated hither and thither and the jagged, waving, and angular lines began to assume shape and meaning.

"If we only had the red-man!" said he. "I think, however, that we can manage that easily enough. I will put that canoe in full view at one end of the lake, and make the Indian with his paddle in hand, in the act of stepping into it."

"The fisherman, opposite, is as quiet as if he were sitting for his portrait. Do you suppose he has noted our presence?"

"No doubt of it, as we have quite a prominent position; but undoubtedly he cares more for the fish than he does for us. There! he has raised his head and is gazing at us. Now, it has dropped again, for he is pulling up something—"

"Sh!" demanded Marian, in a startled whisper. "Look toward that canoe again. Don't you see something like the plumage of a brilliant bird?"

"Don't know but what I do; haven't time, though, to spend in watching it; must work, now that I am started."

"But you must look at it," persisted Marian, "for there is

something that will interest you. I am sure it is the head of an Indian."

The artist gazed at once in the direction indicated, and finally admitted that there was something unusual in the bushes, but nothing more than the ornamented tuft of the Indian, or occasionally the top of his shaven skull. While they were still gazing at it, the savage arose, apparently from a stooping position, disclosing his painted body to the waist, and then suddenly disappeared.

"Now, what more can you ask?" said Marian, "your *element of life* has appeared and departed again."

"I am satisfied."

"How I wish Maggie had come with us! She would have enjoyed this scene so much. I miss her company a great deal."

"And so do I. Do you know, Marian, that I was quite surprised to hear her chat last night. She has intelligence and education that many of our city belles might envy, and I was quite impressed by her."

"You may well be, for she is as noble-hearted a being as ever lived—honest, pure-minded, and truthful to her convictions at all times."

Adolphus Halleck made a show of moving his pencil over paper, while he stole a glance at his cousin beside him. She was looking out upon the lake, and was not conscious of this furtive glance. An odd smile just moved one side of his mouth and then passed away, like a rift of sunshine, as he sat to his task again.

"She seems to be Uncle John's pet—she being the youngest I suppose has made her so."

"It is her own beautiful nature—Dolph, how stationary that fisherman remains."

The two were gazing at the person, who sat as motionless as the rock behind him, when they saw him suddenly pitch forward upon his face, and sink with a loud splash beneath the water. The smothered shriek that came gaspingly across the lake, was scarce a second behind the sharp crack of the death-dealing rifle. A faint bluish wreath of smoke, that curled up from behind a rock in the vicinity of the Indian, showed where the murderer was concealed.

A stillness like that of death succeeded this dreadful interruption, and then our two friends looked at each other.

"It's my opinion, coz, that we had better complete this sketch some other day," remarked the artist, in his careless, self-possessed manner, as he closed his portfolio and arose to his feet.

"Don't! don't!" plead Marian, in terror, "don't you know how you are exposing yourself?"

The words were scarcely out of her mouth, when a second and third report awoke the slumbering echoes of the lake, and the zip, zip of the bullets around them, warned the two that these questionable compliments were certainly intended for them.

"Confound it! some renegade 'aboaryginis' are disgracing their people, by this trickery—"

Marian grasped him and pointed toward the head of the lake, where three Indians were seen leaping and running, and making their way with all speed toward them. Adolphus Halleck by this time, had come to the conclusion that it was of the last importance that he should act in a very decisive manner.

"Be a brave girl, Marian," he whispered, as he took her hand, and dashed down the rocks toward the wood. Seeing that it was his intention to make a direct line for home, she checked him after they had gone a rod or two, and said:

"We can never escape them by running. We must hide ourselves."

The artist glanced hurriedly around, and the next moment shot off toward a fallen tree, the roots of which were enveloped in a dense undergrowth.

"In there, quick! Confound the boys! squeeze in!"

"What are you going to do?" she asked, as he remained standing on the outside.

"Pitch for some other place! 'twouldn't do to stay here. They'd nab us both in ten seconds. Keep still, and don't stir till I come to you again."

Young Halleck turned away, and pulling his hat over his eyes, so that it could not blow off, "ran as no man ran before." His practice in the gymnastics at home, had made him quite muscular and fleet of foot, but he was by no means

equal to his red enemies. He had not yet run a hundred yards, when, to his complete astonishment, a huge Indian, with his tomahawk raised, appeared within twenty feet of him. Uttering a sharp, exultant yell, the savage made directly at him.

"There is little use of arguing the matter with you!" thought the artist, as he produced his revolver, and aimed it at the approaching Indian. The first barrel was discharged, and the bullet bored its way through his shoulder; the other four were pulled in rapid succession; but as the chambers revolved under the hammer, the dull click announced so many failures, and it suddenly flashed upon Halleck's recollection, that there had been but a single barrel loaded.

The presentation of the weapon, however, had the effect of bringing the Indian to a stand still; but he understood at once that the pistol had failed, and poising his tomahawk for an instant above his shoulder, he hurled it with tremendous force at the head of the artist. It was the certainty that this portion of his person would be the target of the tomahawk, that caused the latter to drop his head, at the very second the deadly instrument left his hand. As it whizzed harmlessly over his head, he instantly assumed the upright position, and sent his pistol right into the center of the bronzed visage, with a force that most effectually loosened a half dozen or so of its hinges.

With a howl of fury, the Indian dashed forward, only to encounter the fist of the artist that shot out like a cannon-ball from his shoulder, and sent him turning backward hand-springs. The young man was an adept at this kind of business, and had little fears but what he could knock the powerful, but unskilled savage, completely out of time, provided no other weapons were brought into play. It was to his intense chagrin, therefore, that he saw his enemy draw a murderous knife from his girdle, and advance with more caution to the attack than before.

Still, under this disadvantageous circumstance, he would have engaged the red-skin in a hand-to-hand encounter, had not his ear caught a second signal from another of his kindred. To meet these two, without any weapons of his own, was rather more than he cared to attempt. By this time, too

his lower limbs had become somewhat rested, and he turned and ran.

It is hardly necessary to say that his immediate foe did the same, and with a speed also that made it manifest the race was to be all one way. Still the artist sped away, all the time holding fast to the portfolio, with a ludicrous tenacity, as if it were a charm, to be produced and brought into use only at the last moment.

He had gone but a few rods, when the crackling of twigs and underbrush warned him that his persistent foe was coming up to him with a dangerous rapidity. Expecting every instant the dreaded tomahawk—of which, the Sioux had managed to regain possession—Halleck glanced backward, and in so doing caught his foot, and was thrown forward with considerable violence upon his face.

The pursuer was so close behind that he went looking over him, in spite of a desperate attempt to prevent it. Young Halleck was not stunned, but recovered himself, and feeling that a death-encounter was inevitable, he arose and advanced upon his foe. The latter, grinning through his hideous war-paint, accepted the challenge and calmly awaited the attack.

Scarcely six feet separated the combatants, when the sharp, whip-like crack of a rifle broke the stillness, and the Sioux sprang high in air and fell dead to the earth, at the very feet of Adolphus Halleck.

The latter gazed around in search of his deliverer, but he was nowhere to be seen; and it was impossible to tell from what direction the saving bullet had come. At first, the artist thought it probable that the piece might have been aimed at him; but second thought convinced him that such could not be the case.

He did not forget the shouts of other Indians that had reached his ears a few minutes before, and he gazed carefully about, expecting to see them; but they had disappeared, and the wood was silent.

Waiting until certain that no one intended advancing upon him, he produced his lead-pencil, opened his portfolio, and muttered:

“If that bullet had not been so well aimed I might have

imitated Parrhaseus; but, as it is, I can not omit such a grand opportunity for a sketch."

And thereupon, he proceeded to transfer the form and features of the prostrate warrior to the white paper before him.

CHAPTER V.

THE FRIEND IN NEED.

It may well be supposed that the artist's hand trembled somewhat, as he traced the lineaments of the dead Indian; but, if such was the case, it was more from the unwonted exercise into which he had been forced, than from any nervous excitement occasioned by the encounter. There are some persons upon whom Death, in whatsoever form he comes, makes little or no impression. This stolidity, unlike that of the physician's, is not acquired by familiarity with such scenes, but seems innate with the being himself.

Thus it was with Adolphus Halleck. He calmly surveyed the prostrate savage, and then approached, straightened out his arms, put his legs in a more natural position, and gave him a more picturesque posture generally. Then he receded several steps, turned his head a little one side, and viewed him "with an artist's eye." Having adjusted him to his perfect satisfaction, he began the task of drawing.

"I don't suppose," muttered the young man, with that sly humor which would protrude, at the most inopportune moments, "I don't suppose this can exactly be called a *sitting*, but more properly a *lying*. Now:

"But for one moment—one—till I eclipse

"Conception with the scorn of those calm lips."

It required but a few minutes to complete the picture, and then, placing it away in his portfolio, he arose to his feet, and started back in quest of Marian. A guilty twinge ran through him, at the recollection that he had deferred this important duty, and a vague misgiving, a troublesome fear that all had not gone right, took possession of him, as he hurried back

toward the hiding place. There was no difficulty in finding it, for the events of the last few moments had impressed it indelibly upon his mind. He occasionally paused, and listened, but no untoward sound reached his ear, and, in a few moments, he stood in front of the shrubbery which we have already referred to.

"Come, Marian," said he, "I believe the coast is clear, and we may now return in safety."

There was no movement or response, and, impatient and apprehensive, he dashed the bushes aside. *Marian was gone!*

Halleck was speechless for a moment, and then came the comforting supposition that she had left the hiding-place of her own free will, and made her way home. He argued that if any force had been used, he would have heard screams and outcries, as Marian was not a girl to submit tamely to any insult or violence. And yet Adolphus Halleck by no means felt at ease. He had learned, in a manner which he could never forget, that there were Indians in the wood, and that they were not of a too chivalrous nature to attack defenseless women.

He was standing thus, doubting and hesitating, when a sharp scream of agony reached his ear, from the direction of the lake. It was, unmistakably, the voice of Marian, and, without pausing an instant, to reflect upon the consequences he ran, he dashed headlong through the woods, and up the bank, until he stood upon the very spot where he had been occupied in sketching. He glanced out upon the lake, and saw, half way across it, the canoe which had been nestled under the bushes along the shore. It was speeding away as fast as the combined efforts of two Sioux warriors, with their paddles, could drive it. In the center of the canoe, directly between the two savages, was seated Marion Alford, the very picture of terror and despair. As she caught a glimpse of Halleck, she threw up her arms, screamed "Help! help!" at the top of her voice, and would have leaped overboard, had she not been prevented.

The artist noted the point toward which the boat was aiming, and, although from the nature of the case, it was impossible for him to intercept the Indians, and although he had

not a weapon of any kind in his possession, he did not hesitate a moment, but sprung away at the top of his speed, resolved that the savages should not have their prize, without fighting for it."

He had not progressed half the distance when the canoe was driven high upon the shingles, and the savages sprung ashore, taking Marian with them. At that same moment, while the artist's eyes were riveted upon them, the report of another rifle broke the stillness of the air, and one of the Indians, with a wild cry, released his share, and fell lifeless to the earth, while his companion, as if stricken with a mortal terror, fled away at the top of his speed.

While still wondering from what direction this friendly shot could have come, he discovered Christian Jim, rifle in hand, making his way leisurely down the rocks, toward the terrified girl. The artist comprehended, at once, that it was this same hand which had interposed between death and himself at the critical moment.

"Give us your hand! *You are an Indian!*" exclaimed Halleck, in his enthusiasm, as he advanced toward the savage. "Give us your hand, old boy."

The Sioux failed to do any such thing. He merely gazed upon the excited young man for a moment, and then said:

"Hurry 'way from here! Injun hurry—burn houses—kill every body. Go quick, home."

Despite the apparently quiet, stolid exterior of the Sioux he was unmistakably agitated. His dark eye flitted hither and thither, and there was an unusual abruptness in his manner, that did not escape the notice of both Halleck and Marian.

"Do not let us delay!" said the latter, still pale and trembling from the excess of her terror. "Let us leave here at once."

The Sioux, taking the part of guile, ordered both in the canoe, and, shoving it from the shore, and stepping within himself, sent it swiftly across the lake. Landing at very nearly the spot where our two friends had first seated themselves, they lost no time in hurrying out from the wood.

The rapid, sidling gait of Jim, kept him several yards in advance, and his watchful, restless manner showed that he

was on the alert for any new danger. Their course led them within a few yards of where Marian had been concealed.

"How came you to leave that place?" inquired the artist, with one of his droil expressions, "when I distinctly forbade you, until I came back?"

"I did not leave—I was taken forcibly away. Those two "honorable" Indians of yours came directly to the place, and took me away."

"Why didn't you scream, so that I could come and help you?"

"Scream! I thought I should wake the dead—"

"Ah! here is my pistol, that I flung in the face of one who was chasing me."

The artist stooped and picked it up, and then turned to the left, Jim having changed his course, so as to prevent Marian seeing the savage which his rifle had slain.

"I am of the opinion—"

The Indian suddenly halted, turned around, and retreated several steps, speaking in a rapid whisper:

"Git down; de Sioux be coming!"

All three instantly sunk to the earth, and, for a moment, remained as motionless as death itself. Not the slightest sound reached their ears, and then, as Jim cautiously lifted his head and peered forward, the artist deemed that he might do the same. And gazing thus stealthily forward, he caught a glimpse of a body of Indian warriors, moving, not toward the wood, but by it. They numbered perhaps a score, and the face of every man was the face of a demon. They stalked silently forward, like so many phantoms, upon their errand of death and destruction. The Minnesota Massacre had begun, and these were a portion of the prime movers in it.

A half hour after they had disappeared, the friendly Sioux came to an upright position, and the three again resumed their journey. A few moments, and they were clear of the wood, and making all haste toward home. Marian could not free herself of a terrible misgiving, that all had not gone well during their absence, and she was feverishly impatient to catch a view of it, well remembered surroundings. As they ascended a slight swell in the prairie, and she discovered its familiar outlines, disturbed by no sign of an enemy's presence or work,

her heart gave a great bound of joy, and she felt as if a load had been lifted from her heart.

"It must be that my nerves are all unstrung," said she to her cousin, "for I was almost certain that something had happened to Uncle John, or some of the family, during our absence."

"Do you suppose every one is as attractive to the gallant Sioux as yourself?"

"Fudge! Any person, if he only be white, is attractive to their tomahawks. Suppose that was poor Maggie, instead of myself, and the Indians had succeeded in carrying her away."

Adolphus Halleck appeared to be gazing directly forward, but in reality he was looking sideways, at his nervous, excited and deeply earnest companion. The same dull, mysterious smile was on his countenance, and, in spite of the terrible scenes through which he had recently passed, it was evident that he was vastly amused at something. Several minutes elapsed before he spoke, and then it was upon an entirely different matter.

"Marian, it may be that the brightness of the sun deceives me, but look off yonder to the north-east, and tell me whether that is not genuine smoke making its way up into the sky?"

"I noticed it several minutes ago. Say, Jim, what is that?"

The Sioux partly turned his head, and replied:

"Settler's house burnin'—Injuns set it on fire."

"How far away is it?"

"Six, eight, ten mile."

"I tell you," said Marian, in the whisper of fear, while her face was blanched by her mortal terror, "those Indians will soon be here."

In spite of his indifferent manner, young Halleck did not appear fully at ease. The palpable approach of this dreadful danger could not be denied, and the words of the affrighted Marian were, in reality, those of sense and truth.

"Confound them," he finally exclaimed. "What has gotten into them? The devil himself, I suppose. But what has set them in motion?"

"The same personage, who has constant mystery over them."

"That such is not their natural disposition, is evident from their previous history. These aggressors must be some of the offscourings and vagabonds of the tribes. The Indian himself is a noble creature, and I admire him from the bottom of my heart."

"Yonder is some one on the top of our house. They have scented the danger."

A nearer approach revealed young Brainerd, standing on the peak of the roof, beside the chimney, gazing out upon the prairie. He made some motion toward Jim, which the others did not understand, but which caused the Sioux to hasten his footsteps.

Shortly after the house was reached, and the inmates were found in terrible excitement and apprehension. The smoke in the horizon told too plainly of the work going on and Brainerd, from his lookout, had detected the body of Indians which passed by the lake. At first sight, they were coming toward him, and, in the certain prospect of a speedy visit, the two horses were fastened to the wagon, by Uncle John, for the purpose of fleeing with his family; but a change in the direction, as well as the absence of Marian and Halleck, induced him to hesitate until the approach of the latter was announced. It need scarcely be said that the matter of flight was no longer a question with him. He was only restrained until the others should come up.

The two horses, tied in front of the house, caught the eye of Halleck, and he glanced significantly at Marian.

"Our prospect of remaining here is very doubtful, indeed Uncle John has taken the alarm."

"It is strange if he has not, after so many repeated warnings. Who ever dreamed that in this civilized State of Minnesota, such things would occur. As for myself, I only wish to get out of it as soon as possible."

"I don't. At present, I must confess that my opinion of the aborigine is in doubt. He is, as it were, under a cloud in my estimation. Before I return, I wish to have these doubts cleared away, and have him shine again, in all his splendor."

"O, Adolphus, will you never have sense. If you are

afraid of losing your exalted opinion of those savages, it would be best that you should go home at once, without a moment's delay."

"Catch me," laughed the artist. "That reminds me that you have not seen a sketch I have made of—"

"I have no time to look at sketches, when the lives of us all are in danger," said Marian, impatiently.

In a few moments, all were gathered together within the house. Will Brainerd, just descending from his lookout, reported the horizon clear of enemies, although the evidences of their work were constantly multiplying, and it seemed a wonder that this house, up to the present, had escaped visitation at their hands.

The "Council of war" was short and conclusive. Instant flight was resolved upon, as the only means that offered the slightest chance of safety. Still, while there were ninety-nine chances in a hundred, of a band of fiendish Indians, bent upon outrage and massacre, swooping down upon the house, there was the hundredth chance that it would escape visitation altogether. This remote probability—almost impossibility—was the cause of a slight deviation in the programme at first laid out by apprehensive imaginations.

It was decided that Uncle John, his wife, Maggie, Marian and Jim, should take their departure at once in the team that was waiting at the door, going due east toward St. Paul, traveling rapidly, in the hope of getting out of Minnesota before the infuriated hordes had reached this section. Brainerd and Halleck were to remain behind, and watch the estate, being prepared to flee at an instant's warning. Their object in delaying was to protect the building against vagabond Indians, whose purpose was plunder only. Each was given a trusty rifle, in addition to the pistol owned by the artist. These would be amply sufficient to drive away any thieving body of savages, for such were always cowardly and fearful of encountering any opposition.

Uncle John adjured them to offer no resistance which it was not absolutely certain would be successful, for, in spite of Halleck's protestations to the contrary, he assured them that those Minnesota savages, when their blood was up, were demons incarnate.

"We shall aim for St. Paul, and, when you leave, come directly after us. Jim will be our guide, and Will knows enough of the country to bring you safely through—that is, if you ever start," added Uncle John, in a lower voice.

"We shall start, of course," said Halleck, as he lit his cigar, "for we have no idea of keeping bachelor's hall, and that is the only reason, I assure you—at least it is all I have."

"Can you be in earnest?" asked Maggie, half provoked and half amused at this careless, off-hand way of meeting the dreadful reality of the present.

"I am, indeed, Maggie; I am not yet convinced that these Minnesota Indians are such terrible creatures, after all. You know how easy it is for a body of persons to become panic-struck. Your brother saw evidence of that at Ball Run, last summer."

Uncle John, his wife and Marian, were busy placing such articles as were imperatively necessary in the wagon, preparatory to their flight, while Will Brainerd, anxious and thoughtful, had again ascended to his observatory, upon the top of the house. The artist had essayed to help, but his awkwardness had broken several valuable articles, and sent a half dozen loaves of bread rolling beneath the horses' feet, and he laughingly gave way to more nimble and dexterous hands. The proffered help of Maggie was also declined, and thus it was that she stood in converse with her cousin.

"I can hardly believe you are so indifferent," said she, in answer to his last remark, "Marian has told me what happened in the wood."

"Y-e-s!" he drawled, emitting the smoke, in tiny puffs, from the corners of his mouth, alternately. "Yes, I made a capital sketch of it; I think some of sending it to Harper's, only that I prize it too much. I never had a more docile subject for a picture in my life, than that same Sioux warrior, stretched out before me."

"Suppose Christian Jim had not been in the wood?"

"He did me a good turn, I am glad to admit, and I'd like to make him a present for it."

"He wants, and would accept nothing that looks like pay but I can tell you what would be gratefully received by him, and always prized."

“What’s that?”

“A Bible; I have been instructing him, as chance offered, through the summer, and he is now able to read well. His only wish was to learn to read the Good Book that the missionaries had told him about. He has a cheap copy, that nothing in the world would induce him to part with; but I know he would be delighted with one of those splendidly bound volumes that can be found in almost every book-store. I have no doubt you have such a one about you.”

The artist actually blushed as he replied:

“I am ashamed to say I haven’t; but I can soon get him one, and he shall have one of the very best that money can purchase.”

“You say you have none yourself,” said Maggie, her blue, soulful eyes looking straight into the face of the young man before her.

“Not with me; but I am the owner of several at home—gifts from my mother, sisters, and young ladies interested in my welfare.”

“Let me present you with this,” said Maggie, producing one from her dress, and handing it to him. “I ask only of you the promise that you will occasionally look into it. No person should let a day pass over his head without reading some portion of its contents; but I do not ask that of you, for I know it would sometimes be a task. Only say that you will sometimes do so.”

“I promise.”

The artist accepted the well-thumbed book with evidence that he respected and appreciated its character, if he were unfamiliar, by experience, with the sublime and all-important truths contained in its pages. The earnest words and manner of the girl before him had impressed his heart, and there was positively more discomfort, at that moment, in it, than when he turned and stood at bay before his mortal enemy, the painted Sioux.

“I will look into it when leisure and opportunity offer,” said he; “I will try and do so this very afternoon, after your departure as I expect to have abundant time.”

“Not so much, perhaps, as you think,” said the girl in a voice startlingly impressive, from its low, deep earnestness. “I

tell you, Mr. Halleck, I fear that death is nearer to some of us than you imagine."

"Tut, tut," laughed the artist, replacing the segar in his mouth; "you are frightened and nervous. Dismiss all such idle fears."

And yet, despite his assurance of safety, a great rush of dread ran through him, such as never before, in all his existence, he had experienced. It lasted but a moment, however, and all his careless ease of manner came back to him again.

"I took you for a strong-minded young woman, Maggie, but such talk as this makes me doubt it."

"I *am* strong-minded, but I believe I feel only as every one else of this company does, excepting, perhaps, yourself."

"What a laugh we shall have over this scare, when we all meet down at St. Paul, or when, a few days later, we return to the farm again."

"I hope so; but I fear not. What has become of Jim? I have not seen him for some time."

"He is out yonder, on that little swell of prairie, taking observations, and, as Will is upon the house, there is little danger of an enemy stealing upon us unawares. So, make yourself at ease for the present. Ah! I see Uncle John and the folks have the wagon ready."

Such was the case. The light, spring-bottomed wagon, which had brought the artist from the steamboat landing, only awaited its living freight. Marian was assisted in, Mrs. Brainerd followed, then came her daughter, and Uncle John himself.

"What has become of Jim? Oh! yonder he comes."

The savage, at this moment, sauntered to view, and approached the wagon. Uncle John took the reins in his hand and paused only to say good-by.

"Good-by, my boy!" he called to his son, who was gazing down from the roof. He exchanged farewells with all, wished them a pleasant journey, and then bent his gaze to the horizon, while the others lowered theirs to the ground.

"Don't let that idea of the Indian prove your destruction, as I fear it will," said Mrs. Brainerd, and she, with the others, shook hands with the artist.

"Never fear for me. It is you who are to be pitted good-by, Margie," exclaimed the artist, as he touched her hand to his lip.

"Good-by!" she responded, "don't forget the Bible—"

A sudden exclamation from the roof arrested all. Young Brainerd in an excited tone called to them to halt, for he had descried a new and threatening danger.

CHAPTER VI.

SUSPENSE.

FAR away over the prairie, to the eastward, in such a position that they must inevitably intercept the fugitives, young Brainerd had descried three Indians on foot, the probabilities were that they were friendly, but this by no means was certain, and at such a terrible crisis as this, the risk was too great. Hence his great anxiety to prevent the departure of his friends.

"What is the matter now?" called out Uncle John, who shared the alarm, perhaps, less than the females around him.

"Send Jim up here; there are signs off there in the east, which I do not like."

The Sioux instantly entered the house, and a few moments later appeared upon the roof. One glance proved that the young man's suspicions were well-founded, and he called out the fact to those below, who were so anxiously awaiting his words.

"They are directly in your path, and you can not avoid encountering them."

"I rather think you can easily save yourselves the trouble of meeting them," said the artist, with a sly look at Marian.

"How so?" inquired the latter.

"By turning round and going the other way, or, for the matter by not going at all."

"You must wait awhile!" called Brainerd. "It won't do to leave yet."

"Pshaw!" laughed Halleck, with his accustomed *nonchalance*, "they are only a few Indians sauntering around the country. They have an eye to the beauties of nature, and are making observations. Who knows but that they have an artist among them? But I should think they would remain here, upon such a warm afternoon as this."

The inmates of the wagon, surveyed the explanation of the last paragraph, as if they doubted his sanity, while he only wafted away as leisurely as ever at his cigar. All at once he started and struck his hand upon his side-pocket, as a sudden recollection flashed across him.

"Why didn't I think of it? I have a spy-glass in my pocket, a young telescope, that will help those poor fellows up there. We might as well put it to some use, as not. I'd forgotten entirely that I had it with me, or I should have called it into use when Marian and I weren't sure whether we saw a canoe or not under those bushes along the lake."

With this he entered the house, and shortly after joined those upon the roof. He first offered his instrument to the Sioux, but the latter would not touch it, and he handed it to Brainerd. The latter gazed but a moment, when he said:

"I see three Indians loitering yonder, as if they were waiting for some one—and yes—there are several others lying flat upon the ground."

"Ain't they beneath the shade?"

"No; right on the open prairie."

"It must be that they are tired out, and have lain down to rest awhile; let me take a peep."

"Do you see any thing of those upon the ground?" inquired Brainerd, addressing himself to the Indian.

"Yes; see half dozen—stretched out flat."

"What is the meaning of it?"

"Dunno."

"Do you imagine they are waiting or watching for any of us?"

"Why, under the sun, Will, would they do that?" asked the artist, "when they could be seen two, three miles away. If they wanted to harm you, and were as demoniac as you attempt to make out, don't you suppose they would come

right straight to the house? What will it advantage them to try such a foolish game as that?"

"I can not answer, 'Dolph; I can only tell you that it is hard to understand the working of an Indian's brain. Shrewd and cunning as we know them to be, they sometimes do things which are strictly incomprehensible."

Young Brainerd again took the glass and announced that the savages had arisen to their feet, and both bodies had united. All of them were discernible with the naked eye, but their movements, as thus viewed, were uncertain.

"My heavens! they are coming!" exclaimed Brainerd scarcely able to repress his excitement.

"The deuce! keep quiet, old boy, don't let the folks down below see you, or they will be frightened."

"Frightened! and isn't it enough to frighten any one. Why, they'll be here in a half hour."

"That ain't so sure; if you'll only look a little sharper you will see that they are not coming this way after all."

Such proved to be the case, although its knowledge brought only a temporary relief; for the movements of the savages were so erratic and uncertain, that there was no divining their object. They had scarce begun taking to themselves a little comfort at their fortunate change, when they deviated again, and now moved directly toward the house.

These strange Indians could not avoid seeing the farmhouse, and beyond all doubt had debated with themselves, whether to approach it or not. While young Brainerd was almost beside himself with consternation, they altered their course for the third time, taking such a direction, that, if continued, would lead them several miles away from the house. No words can picture the anxiety with which Will Brainerd surveyed their motions through the spy-glass. Slowly and almost imperceptibly, like the movement of the hour-hand around the face of a watch, they went further away on the circumference marked by the horizon, until they had passed fully forty-five degrees, without approaching apparently any closer to the house.

"All right!" exclaimed Halleck, "those red-skins wouldn't disturb you for the world. I have read enough books to know something about them."

"We go now," said the Sioux, descending through the house to the ground. Young Brainerd was too apprehensive and anxious to leave his post; and, as the artist had already bid his friends good-by, he deemed it hardly worth while to repeat it; so the two merely waved their farewells, and the wagon moved away.

The animals which drew these five persons, were of the ordinary kind used upon a farm, which, while they possessed considerable strength and bottom, were not very swift of foot, although, when urged to their utmost, they could go at quite a rapid rate.

The artist and his friend maintained their position upon the roof. As we have hinted before, it was directly beside the chimney, and was reached from a trap-door. It consisted simply of a few slats fastened to the shingles, so as to offer a secure footing. Taking things in his usual unconcerned manner, the former seated himself, and holding his glass in hand, settled it toward his departing friends, with the intention of watching them as long as they remained in his field of vision.

Young Brainerd kept the standing position, with his hand upon the chimney beside him, so that he had every portion of the horizon at his command. Although such was the case, it may actually be supposed that his gaze constantly wandered to the east, where his dearest friends on earth, must for some time be visible.

Standing thus, and gazing away over the prairie, he again saw the Indians pause, as if they had once more changed their minds, or else were carrying out some subtle plan for the capture of the little band of fleeing fugitives.

"Halleck, what can those infernal rascals mean?" he asked, feeling sick at heart at the repeated disappointments, when hope had seemingly resolved itself into certainty.

"What can they mean?" repeated the artist, without lowering the glass, "I don't suppose they mean any thing in particular; it strikes me you are mighty suspicious. You attend to your part of the horizon, and I will attend to this portion."

"I tell you," said Brainerd, knitting his brow with anxiety, "I can't feel easy regarding matters in that direction. It looks much as though there were a scheme afoot which

As, not even Christian Jim, understands. Halle ! they are on the move again, and thank God, exactly in the right direction."

"Of course, of course," responded Halleck. "Now, Will please not to trouble yourself about this particular portion of the landscape. If there be any views worth seeing, depend upon it they will not escape my observation."

Notwithstanding this assurance, the young man kept an unremitting scrutiny of the eastern horizon, until his friends were but a mere moving speck in the distance, and the Indians had faded from view altogether.

A half hour later, when they had completely disappeared he asked the artist, who still held the instrument to his eye as if viewing some unusual object.

"Do you still see them?"

"Yes; I can just make them out."

"Is there any thing suspicious?"

"What could there be?" replied Halleck, still straining his vision, as if he were by no means satisfied with what he saw.

"Let me take a look," said Brainerd, extending his hand toward the spy-glass.

"It is hardly worth while, they are so far away, that most probably you will not be able to see them at all. I only keep them in view by holding the glass in a steady position."

Well was it for the young man's peace of mind that he did not look through the instrument. Had he done so, he would have discovered at an apparently short distance in the rear of his friends the forms of several savages, who from all appearances were in full pursuit. The artist saw this, but deemed it hardly worth while to disturb his companion by the knowledge of such a trifling circumstance. It was not until the glass was useless, that he coolly replaced it in his pocket. Adolphus Halleck will never forget the revelation of that spy-glass as long as he lives.

It was now late in the afternoon; a light breeze stirred up the tree-tops around them, the sky was partly overcast, and there were some premonitions of an approaching storm. The wind came with refreshing coolness upon the heated roof, and made the situation of our two friends more comfortable in a physical sense than it had been during the day. Young

Brainerd, at the artist's earnest solicitation, seated himself beside Lim.

"You see, Will, you might as well take things easy. Now, if we are going to have a visit from these dusky sons of the forest, why let them come. I am certain I should enjoy their visit very much, it would enable me to enrich my portfolio considerably."

"I don't know," said Brainerd, with an air of slight vexation, whether this indifference of your's is entirely genuine or not; but I should think the experience of the day would have demolished some of the ideas you had last night."

"Not a particle, not a particle," laughed the artist, in such a jovial way, that no one could be impatient with him; "what a laugh we shall have over this scare, when we meet down at St. Paul."

"Yes, if *we* ever get there! You can make up your mind to one thing, Halleck, the blood in your veins will 'freeze with horror,' before you get out of the State of Minnesota. I have lived here long enough to know what these Indians are, when they are fairly aroused. There is no crime too great for them to commit, and there are no lengths to which they will not go. I believe death is very, very close to some of us—far closer than most of us imagine."

As the night approached, young Brainerd grew painfully restless and apprehensive, while the carelessness and indifference of the artist, became, if possible, greater than ever. Now he lifted the spy-glass to his eye, whistled a few moments, then hummed "Marching Along," and speculated upon the probable shade of news from the seat of war. The sky, which was still overcast and threatening, failed to break forth in a storm, and it was evident that if any rain at all fell before morning, it would be nothing more than a mist or slight shower. As the night deepened, the artist again placed away the instrument, and turned inquiringly toward his companion, as if to ask him whether he intended remaining longer upon the roof, now that their vision was so limited.

"I hardly know what to say," he answered, in great perplexity, "first look to the west and north-west, and see the glare against the sky. I tell you, Halleck, they have only fairly begun. Their blood is fairly up, and these awful

outrages must increase. Right to the north of us, just to the left of that piece of wood, is the house of old Mr. Smith. It is nearly ten miles distant, and I think they will receive the first visit."

"When a fire breaks out there, I'll admit it will be time for us to think of moving our quarters."

"Look!"

Trembling and all excitement, young Brainerd placed his hand upon the shoulder of the artist, and pointed toward the house of which he had just spoken, a small point of light, like a star of intense brightness, had suddenly flashed to view. It spread and increased with such rapidity, that there could not be a moment's doubt of its identity.

"What do you say to that?" asked young Brainerd, in a sort of triumphant terror.

"Are you acquainted with Mr. Smith?"

"Surely I know him better than I do you."

"Who comprise his family?"

"Himself, wife, and three small children."

"What sort of people are they?"

"What do you mean by such questions?"

"Is the father or mother careless? or do they allow their children to run into any danger with their eyes open?"

"What does all this mean, 'Dolph?"

"Nothing, only I thought they might have allowed their children to play with fire, and thus inadvertantly touched off the house themselves."

"No sane man can doubt who are the authors of that deed."

"Well, suppose they *are* Indians, which I want you to understand I don't admit, what is it you propose to do?"

"As father intrusted the place to us, and, as this is all of our earthly possessions, we can not think of leaving until we can remain no longer. I will go down and place our horses where they can be reached at a moment's warning, and then prepare to watch."

Will Brainerd took his departure to perform his self-imposed duty, while the artist still remained upon the roof. The former brought the animals from the stable, after they were fully saddled and bridled, and then led them to a clump

of trees near the barn, where they would not be likely to attract attention. Here he secured them, and then joined his companion.

There could be no doubt that the infuriated Indians had fully commenced their fiendish work. In the northern, western, and southern horizon could be seen the lurid glare of conflagration, and to the over-strained ear of Will Brainerd, there came strange, unearthly wailings and shoutings upon the night air. Whether it was entirely imagination or not, it was impossible to say; but more than once he was sure that the sound of human voices reached him. When he questioned Halleck regarding this, he replied, of course, that he heard nothing of the kind, although, whether he really spoke the truth or not, could not be determined.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIENDS AT THEIR WORK.

"HAVE you seen any thing particularly alarming?" inquired the artist, as young Brainerd rejoined him.

"Nothing in addition. Have you noted any thing?"

"Well, yes, I suppose you would call it that. Do you see that large bush, just off yonder?"

"Yes."

"If I am not greatly mistaken, there are two Indians squatted behind that. I ain't sure, but I'm positive enough to swear to it, if it were necessary."

"Halleck!" whispered the young man, "come off the roof! Do you wish to be shot dead?" and he grasped him by the arm and pulled him toward the trap-door. The next moment, they had disappeared beneath it. The artist reached up to draw it shut. "Don't," said his friend, in a low, cautious tone, "they would know we suspected something. Let us make our way to the second story, where we can get a better view of the bush."

Each held his rifle in his hand, and from the fact that both

were moving in the utter darkness of closed rooms, their movements were guided by extreme care. The artist, who did not possess the familiarity of his companion, labored under a particular disadvantage, falling over chairs, and stumbling against the furniture, in a manner that threatened more serious consequences than the dislocation of his own neck.

"Sh!" admonished young Brainerd, "look sharp now."

The shutters of both the upper and lower stories were securely closed. Stealthily raising one of the windows, the latter pushed open the shutter an inch or two, so as to afford them an opportunity of gazing out without attracting attention. Will Brainerd was on the point of directing the artist's attention toward the bush which had awakened their suspicions, when both were startled by a loud rap upon the front door, and the summons, in good English:

"Let me in."

"Let us see how many there are of them," said the former, "before we let them know we are inside."

"There is a half dozen, I'll warrant," replied Halleck, shuffling across the floor to the front window.

The latter was raised with the greatest care, and both peered through a crack in the half-opened shutter. To their unbounded astonishment, they saw the shadowy forms of fully a dozen Indians grouped around the door.

"Is there any use?" asked the artist, drawing back into the room.

"Not the least; all we can do is to get ourselves out of here as soon as possible."

The knocking on the door was continued most vigorously, and the demand for admission was almost incessant. Both young men descended, silently, to the ground floor.

"Now," said the artist, "you slip out of the back window while I keep them in front by parleying with them."

"It looks too much like deserting one in his extremity. I can not go," replied Brainerd, refusing to leave.

"Go!" repeated Halleck, impatiently, fairly forcing him to the window, "it is all we can do."

"And what will become of you?"

"I am not afraid of these on the outside. I should not fear to venture among them."

"You shall not commit suicide in that manner, if I can prevent it."

"I don't intend to do so," replied Halleck; "you hop out and make for the horses, and I will follow you as soon as it is advisable."

The window was raised, and the shutter thrown open. Not sign of a savage was visible, and Brainerd stepped softly out, while the artist turned to attend to the Indians, whose clamor was almost deafening.

"Who's there?" he demanded, in a loud voice.

"Poor Injun—want to come in—tired; want something to eat."

"Do you want to stay all night?"

"No; go away soon—not stay long—tired; want to ~~all~~ down and rest."

"Try the porch awhile, and see how that goes; and if you don't like it, you can then come inside."

Profound silence succeeded this impudent reply, and then there came a rush against the door that almost carried it from its hinges. Adolphus Halleck concluded the "advisable moment" had come, and lost no time in following Brainerd out of the window with no definite purpose in view. He lowered the window behind him, and forced the shutter back to its place again. This act, trifling in itself, was the means of saving his life; for he had scarce completed it, when the door was burst open, and the infuriated Sioux poured tumultuously in. Had the window been left open, they would have instantly understood the cause, and, in less than one minute, the artist would have been in their hands. Finding nothing of him, however, they supposed he had fled to the upper stories, and they immediately hurried up the stairs.

As the artist came into the garden, he peered and looked around him, hoping to catch a glimpse of his questionable companion; but seeing nothing of him, he walked leisurely away, carrying his rifle in one hand, his portfolio under his other arm, and an unlit cigar in his mouth. The only mishap with which he met was in encountering a clothes line, which, as he expressed it, "caught him beneath the chin, and almost sawed his head off."

Beyond the garden, beneath the shelter of a large tree, he

paused to listen to the savages, who were hurrying through the house, no doubt in quest of those who were supposed to be concealed within it."

"You may look there all night," he laughed to himself; "but, it is the opinion of a certain gentleman about my age and figure, that you will search a little longer before you find Mr Adolphus Halleck. *Bonjour*, my copper-skinned friends, until we chance to meet again."

Deeming it imprudent to remain longer in the vicinity, he made his way toward the spot where Brainerd had promised to be with the horses. To his amazement, nothing was to be seen either of him or them. He was puzzled to understand the meaning of this, with the feeling that he would encounter some explanation; but nothing rewarded his gaze, and he began half to fear that he had been left alone in the midst of these formidable dangers. He went so far as to call the name of his companion several times, in a suppressed voice but, receiving no answer, he ceased, determined, for the future to be his own counsellor and guide.

He was certainly in an extraordinary position—left alone within gunshot of the band of Indians, whose deadly hostility could not be doubted. With no means, except those such as nature had given him, he was at a loss how to escape from those whose vindictiveness spared no age or sex. Even he began to debate upon the most proper course for him to pursue.

To remain where he was until morning, would be the same as surrendering himself into the hands of the Sioux, who were in that mood in which it may literally be said, "they thirsted for blood." The house, outbuildings, and every thing combustible, would be a mass of charred cinders by daylight, so none of them could offer the slightest chance for concealment. To wander forth, alone, over the prairie, striking east toward St. Paul, he doubted not would eventually take him safely out of his trouble; but there was the physical exertion to which he was constitutionally opposed, and to which he had no intention of resorting, until absolutely compelled to do so.

"Hang it," he muttered, "what can have become of Will and the horses? Hello!"

A bright, arrowy point of flame quivered through the shingles, near the chimney, and, a moment after, another and another made its appearance in different parts of the house, showing unquestionably that the house was on fire.

The artist had learned enough of conflagrations in the city of New York to know that, if he remained in his present position, the glare of this one would reveal his form as distinctly as if at broad noonday. Accordingly, he turned to move, and, as he did so, encountered a huge painted Indian, standing within six feet of him. Halleck instinctively placed his hand upon his revolver, but, ere he could draw it, the savage exclaimed:

"White man's friend—hoss off yonder—wait dere for you."

And almost instantly he disappeared, despite the effort of the artist to detain him.

"That's a genuine Indian," said he, "just the kind I believe in. Plague on it, why didn't he wait till I could take his likeness. He was a splendid fellow. I should like to exchange cards with him. How did he know where Brainerd had hid himself?"

It never once occurred to Halleck that this savage was deceiving him. He placed implicit confidence in his statement, and followed in the direction which had been pointed out to him. As he did so, he caught the shadowy figures of several mounted Indians, who failed to observe him. The illumination from the burning building by this time had become so great, that he was in constant danger of being detected by some prowling warrior.

It need scarcely be said that the enthusiastic artist had come to the conclusion that it was hardly prudent to venture among those noble aborigines, who would have scrambled for his scalp as greedily as a lot of boys would have clutched at some coveted prize thrown among them. As a consequence, his actions were more circumspect, and his ears and eyes more on the alert for any threatened danger. Still, had Adolphus Halleck been questioned fairly and pointedly, he would have given it as his belief that this was only a temporary excitement of the Sioux, and even white men were, some times, dangerous at such times.

He made his way, without difficulty, to the spot indicated by his dusky friend, where the first object his eyes encountered was the figure of young Brainerd, holding both horses by their heads.

"You must pardon me," he hastened to say, "for failing to keep my appointment; but they came too close to me, and thought it best to move further away before it was too late."

"All right; I am glad you did, for it is just as good as day light in that section."

"How did you find me?"

"Some majestic, noble American Indian told me, without any solicitation on my part."

"Ah, yes, it was Paul, another converted savage."

"If he is a Christian, what is he doing in such business as this?"

"He has been driven into it to save his own life. I'll warrant he does only enough to ward off suspicion of himself, and seeks every opportunity of doing good, as has just been proved. We will probably hear more of him yet."

"I am sure I should like to make his acquaintance, and get a likeness of his to send east."

"Let us mount," said Brainerd, "and be ready for any emergency."

The two did so, and, from the backs of their steeds, peered out upon the dreadful picture of desolation before them. The whole house was a mass of living, roaring, seething fire, which made the heavens above seem as a vast crimson arch.

"Too bad, too bad," muttered Brainerd, disconsolately. "That is the second time father has been ruined—our hard-earned home is perishing before our eyes."

"Don't you think, Will, those savages will make it all right again, after they get over this little flurry of excitement?"

"From the uproar they are making," said Brainerd, without noticing the profound wisdom of the last remark, "they appear to be congregated upon the opposite side of the house. I am anxious to know what it means. Suppose I make a circuit, so as to get a view of them."

"Shall I await you here?"

"If we appear to run no risk in doing so. Should you feel

uncomfortable, ride out on the prairie, in the same direction that our friends took this morning. I will soon rejoin you."

"Don't be too long away," added Halleck. "Not that I fear for ourselves, but I am quite anxious to catch up with them."

As Brainerd had proposed, he rode off on the prairie, so as to get a view of the opposite side of the house, while the artist waited and watched for his return. The latter had not sat thus for more than ten minutes, when he began to fear for his own safety. In addition to the dwelling itself, the savages had fired the surrounding buildings, and some of these were comparatively a short distance from where he stood. As naturally would be the result, some of the Indians were wandering in this direction.

His uneasiness became so great, that he wheeled around, and did not check his animal until he stood far beyond the utmost reach of the light of the conflagration. Here he awaited his companion.

There was a peculiar fascination in the burning building, and the artist scarcely turned his head when he heard the clump of the horses' hoofs.

"This way, Brainerd!" he called, as he rode forward to meet him. "It is an impressive sight, indeed. It gives me an idea of what a burning ship, at sea, must be."

His companion made no reply, and he added, as he rode beside him.

"It strikes me, Will, that we are going more to the north than the east. Sh! there's the tramp of somebody's horse."

Both instantly halted, and preserved a strict silence. As if they had been heard, however, the horseman came directly toward them, and, before either suspected it, the figure of a savage loomed up in the misty darkness, coming almost within striking distance before he halted. Halleck, upon his first approach, had instinctively felt for his revolver, but, to his dismay, found that it was lost.

"Quick, Will, before—"

He paused abruptly, for, instead of young Brainerd sitting beside him, he recognized a second savage, with whom he had ridden a short distance. Thus, unexpectedly, he was placed between the two, with no weapon at his command, except his

unwieldy ride. Ere he could call this into use, the first-mentioned savage said :

“ White man—s’render—take scalp, if don’t ! ”

“ There seems to be no help for it, so here goes. I expect you to treat me in the chivalrous manner, which has rendered your people so distinguished throughout the world.”

“ You go wid us,” added the one already mentioned, turning the head of his horse toward the burning buildings.

Thus far, the savage who appeared last, had not spoken a single word, or made the slightest demonstration. He merely took his position to the left of the prisoner, who was thus guarded in a most effectual manner. The artist took the best view the darkness would permit of this personage ; a strange thrill ran through him, as he fancied he detected a resemblance to the Indian Paul, who had befriended him a short time before. Several times he was on the point of speaking, but he checked himself, and they rode forward in silence.

The fact of his not speaking was singular. The artist was imagining all manner of things, when the unknown one fell back a few paces, and the other, as if wondering what it could mean, did the same. Halleck, fearing some sinister design against himself, turned his head to watch their motions. He was just soon enough to see one of the Indians ride close to the other, a quick sweep of the arm, and his first acquaintance fell dead from his horse.

“ You stay here,” said the survivor, whose identity could be doubted no longer ; “ oder white man soon be here—Injin after women folks—catch up wid ’em—get dere scalps.”

The speaker galloped rapidly away, leaving his auditor in a whirl of strange emotion. The hint which he had thrown out regarding the danger of his friends, was but a confirmation of a strange fear which had possessed him since night fall. He was now all anxiety to follow in pursuit of the wagon, and he impatiently awaited the approach of Brainerd.

Again the sound of a horse’s feet filled him with expectation. He made ready, however, to receive him, whether a friend or foe. He was not disappointed. A moment later, young Brainerd rode up beside, and, in a few words, learned all that had transpired since his departure.

They turned to take a last look of the western home, now sinking into a mass of blazing embers, and then, with anxious and foreboding hearts, started forward in pursuit of their cherished and endangered friends.

CHAPTER VIII.

FLYING TO THE RESCUE.

SHORTLY after midnight, a fine, misty rain began falling which continued without intermission until morning. Both horsemen were drenched to the skin, which rendered their situation doubly uncomfortable. The artist was anxious to stop and kindle a fire, but the young settler strenuously opposed it, giving as a reason that it would inevitably attract attention on such a damp morning.

The character of the country over which they were now journeying, was materially changed. Instead of the comparatively level prairie, it was diversified by luxuriant vegetation, streams, hills of no inconsiderable elevation, and occasionally groves of timber. Of these latter, the settler invariably manifested apprehension, and took pains to make as great a circuit around them as possible.

As yet, they had not detected a single sign of an enemy, and young Brainerd began seriously to entertain the hope that the devastating hordes of Little Crow, Wacouta, Wabashaw, and Red Legs, had not yet penetrated as far east as this, although he could not feel entirely at ease, from the fact that they had reached his starting point the day before.

By the time the sun had reached the meridian, the wants of nature became peremptory; they decided that it was as well to stop at once and secure what food was necessary. The streams and lakes of Minnesota abound with fish, and the woods with almost every species of game, so that it was no difficult matter for them to bring down what food they wanted.

As the woods were the proper place to look for this

Indispensable article, they swerved to the right, and bent their steps toward a wood of perhaps twenty or thirty acres in extent. When several hundred yards distant, Brainerd checked his horse.

"I don't suppose we are running any great risk," said he, "in approaching the woods in this manner, *but I don't like it.*"

"Why?"

"There is no fathoming the deviltry of these red-skins. We are not safe, except upon the open prairie."

"They are a brave, chivalrous people, and would attack us openly."

"If they could do so, and in numbers that would make the result certain; but you see, we are well-mounted, and they have no chance of harming us in an honest race. If they could only entrap us, it would be just what they wish."

"If you prefer, you can remain here and wait for me."

"No; I go with you."

The two rode forward and entered the wood together. Riding a short distance, they halted and gazed around them. It was as still as the tomb, and not a sign of animal life was visible.

"I guess we are alone," added young Brainerd, "and as the wood is pretty thick here, suppose we dismount and take different directions, so as to make sure of knocking something over."

"All right," responded Halleck, as he proceeded to carry out the suggestion. "When we get all the game we can carry, we meet here."

The two separated, the artist going to the right, and his companion to the left. There were any quantity of squirrels firing hither and thither, but they disclaimed to use their weapons upon such small game, and sought that most worthy of their skill.

In the midst of his wanderings, the artist came upon a small spring of water, walled in by large rocks, over which lametrees nodded, and from whose roots the icy cold water oozed out, and made its way to the spring below; it was a wild looking spot, and after quaffing his fill at the crystal fount, he resolved at once to transfer its features to paper. Accordingly he produced his portfolio and completed

the work without interruption of any kind. During the progress of his task, he heard some half dozen times the discharge of the settler's rifle; and he concluded that his success could permit this indulgence; however, he was loth to return empty handed, and placing away his portfolio and shouldering his gun, he continued his hunt. Immediately after hearing again the report of Brainerd's piece, he was startled by sound, such as a dying man would utter. He glanced furtively around him. Again it was repeated, so distinctly that there could be no mistake in its character. It came from a thick clump of undergrowth, about a hundred feet distant. Hurrying to this, he found a man stretched upon his back, so badly wounded, that he was already within a few moments of dissolution.

The artist bent tenderly over him, and asked:

"How comes this my friend?"

"Oh!" said he, looking around him, as if expecting every moment the approach of some dreaded enemy, "it was them savages. They have killed my wife and children, and driven me here to die."

"Where are the Indians?"

"All around; have you not seen them?"

"Are there any more whites besides you in the woods?"

"There were four of us, whom the savages have followed since morning."

"Where are they?"

"They all three lie close to the spring where they were shot."

The artist moved away to ascertain the truth of what he had been told him. Sure enough, he found two boys and one man, cold and stiff in the embrace of death. They were shot and tomahawked in such a brutal manner, that the eye of affection would scarcely have recognized them.

With strange emotions the artist gazed upon the scene, and then turned upon his heel. Returning to the bushes, he found the man dead. He stood a moment, as if lost in reverie. Then the sharp crack of a rifle and the whistle whizz of the messenger as it passed his face, warned him that he too was in danger. His first movement would have done credit to a veteran woodsman. He sprang behind a tree, and stood b

upright, so as to shelter his body from another stray bullet. He had noted the direction from which the missile came, and, of course, took care that he should be upon the right side of the tree.

Halleck's great apprehension was, that there might be several enemies to encounter, in which case, he stood an exceedingly slight chance with them. To his gratification however, he caught sight of only a single dusky figure—that of the savage who had discharged the gun at him.

"You impudent vagabond," muttered the artist, drawing his gun to his shoulder, "let me teach you manners."

The Indian caught sight of the rifle-barrel, and whisked behind a tree at the very moment it was discharged, thus saving himself by about as narrow a chance as generally falls to the lot of mortals. Without waiting to note the effect of his shot, Halleck reloaded his rifle with all rapidity, so as to be ready for any emergency. He was ramming the charge "home," when a triumphant yell broke upon his ear, and he saw the savage approaching him with a bounding exultant step, as if sure of his prey.

Quick as thought, the artist raised his piece and pointed it at him, the ramrod projecting several inches from the muzzle. He had not yet placed the cap upon it, so that it was really useless; but as his assailant could not be positive that such was the case, he evidently concluded it best to make his safety sure, by ducking behind a second tree.

Taking advantage of this momentary respite, Halleck finished loading his gun, placed the cap upon the tube, and composedly awaited the action of his assailant. By this time, he had become satisfied that he had but one foe to contend against, and he rather enjoyed this contest, where, in every case, both stood upon equal grounds.

As both were now behind cover, the matter had simply become a trial of strategy. He, who was skillful enough to keep his person protected, and to gain a shot at his opponent, most evidently would be the winner. Both being sensible of this, exerted themselves to the utmost to catch the other off guard.

There is a little story that all of us have heard, about a man, who, when caught in such a dilemma as the artist,

deceived the Indian, by placing his hat upon a stick, thus appearing, as if incautiously exposing his head. Having drawn his fire in this manner, the white man dispatched the savage, as he was leaping exultingly toward him, and confident of obtaining his scalp. Some years before, the enthusiastic artist had drawn a picture of this incident, and it flashed upon his remembrance, the very moment he had reloaded his piece.

Placing his Panama upon the muzzle of his rifle, he shoved it out a few inches from the tree. Unfortunately for the success of his artifice, he overdid the matter, and the dasky foe grinned sardonically, as he saw the hat dangle for a moment and then drop to the ground. He drew it to him by means of his gun, and repeated the artifice several times, but with no success. He finally concluded that the Indian must have seen his sketch or read the story, so that he was fully warned against it.

At this point, Adolphus Halleck recollected that he had his loaded revolver in his pocket, and thus possessed a vast advantage over his enemy. At the same moment of making this discovery, he noted that the Indian was either exposing himself, or adopting the same artifice that he had attempted himself. A knob, or bell-like protuberance, closely resembling a head covered with a blanket, came to view, and then suddenly disappeared. A moment later, it reappeared upon the opposite side of the trench. With a half smile, the artist raised his piece and discharged it.

As he expected, a triumphant yell was the response, and the savage, with uplifted tomahawk came bounding toward him. The rifle dropped from the white man's hand, and his right arm straightened itself as rigid as iron, while he cast an anxious eye over the sight of his revolver. The savage did not suspect his danger, until three quick reports broke the stillness, and as many messengers of death buried themselves in the Indian's body.

"Rifles are not the only things that shoot, my dasky friend," said the artist, as he replaced the weapon in his pocket. "That little instrument don't make much of a show, but it has done me more than one good turn. Who knows but some more vagabonds like yourself may be in the vicinity, so I will reload my piece."

He proceeded to do this, and then approached his fallen foe, who was still struggling upon the ground. He was a demoniac savage, who richly deserved his fate. He had slain many women and children, and committed outrages too revolting to appear in these pages. Not one of the thirty-eight who suffered the extreme penalty of the law shortly afterward, merited his punishment more than did the one in question.

His face was fearful to look upon, distorted as it was by the most malignant hate and ferocity. He glared at Ha'leek, as if he would have annihilated him by his look. The latter could not forbear commiserating him, although he saw he was beyond all human help.

"I am sorry that it was necessary to do this," said he, but you must blame yourself alone for it. Is there any thing I can do for you?"

"Keep away, keep away," ejaculated the savage, in good English—"keep away; me kill."

"I don't doubt that in the least, if the chance were given you; but, I shall stay beyond your reach, so long as you are able to do harm."

"*Keep away; go ho'p wagon run o'er prairie. Uncle John and women—warrior Injun soon catch 'em.*"

For a moment the artist stood transfixed. There was no mistaking the meaning of those words. They referred to his friends, who had left the day before, and who, by this time, he had believed were beyond all possibility of danger. Without waiting to hear more, he threw his rifle over his shoulder, and made all haste to their rendezvous.

Neither animal had been disturbed during his absence, and he impatiently awaited the return of Bramerd. Had not the latter made his appearance very soon, it is all probability the artist would have ventured on alone so feverish was his desire to get to their assistance. In the course of twenty minutes the young settler came to view, literally loaded with game. A few words explained all, and neither of them, who had experienced the pangs of hunger so acutely an hour before, felt the least craving for the tempting food in their possession. As a precaution, however, it was placed upon the backs of their horses, and the two set forth.

"It seems to me that there are an amazing sight of

vagabond Indians wandering over the country," remarked the artist, as they came out upon the prairie. "And these same vagabond fellows, somehow or other, take an especial liking to me."

"They are the 'noble warriors' of whom you poetize so much, and it is the same noble men who are following father, mother and sister like bloodhounds—the same ones who will dance with joy at the prospect of seeing the reeking scalps of Marian or Maggie."

"I do detest those vagabond Indians, that are always on the borders of civilization. If we were only located several hundred miles further west—"

"Our lives would not be safe for a minute," impatiently interrupted young Brainerd. "It's time, 'Daddy, you gave up those nonsensical ideas, and came to look upon the American Indian as he is, and not as your fancy has painted him!"

"I don't believe they would have committed a single crime had they not been goaded to it by some great injustice."

"It is true that they have been badly treated. From my own personal knowledge, I know they have been swindled and abused by the traders and agents. When they demanded nothing but their simple rights, and what had been promised them, they were met with curses and kicks; and I know, too, of instances of starvation, when there were hundreds of dollars due them. The causes of this great outbreak, beyond all question, are those same traders and agents. It is they who must answer for the whirlwind of death that is sweeping over the land. But can the oppression, however great, excuse the massacre of innocent women and children, and of good and true men, who have been their friends?"

"It palliates the act; for it is an indirect revenge, which is more gratifying to them than to bear and suffer in silence."

"How sad it is that, when we have met with such severe reverses in the South, we should now have this 'how added also.'"

"It will last but a short time," added the artist, rather complacently. "It is but an ebullition of passion, that must find its vent in some way or other."

"The poor refugees are flying in every direction. If the

Sissetons, the Yanktonais, and the Yanktons join the insurgents, who knows that we shall be safe even at St. Paul?"

"How you magnify danger, Will? Because we have chanced upon a few fellows who were chased to the wood, you think the whole North-West is aroused."

"Had you resided in this section as long as I have, you would never utter such foolish thoughts, even if you possessed them."

"What a splendid view!" exclaimed the artist, enthusiastically. "If we had time, how I should enjoy taking a sketch of it."

"If you think it of more importance than the lives of our friends, we will pause while you do so."

"I had no intention or wish to do so, and, Will, you must not be so testy. There's no harm, however, in admiring the landscape as we ride along. Just observe that beautiful piece of woods off to the left, this sweep of prairie to the right, the faint outlines of those far-off mountains against the horizon, and that abrupt hill yonder. That would appear well in the foreground. I say, Will," spoke the artist, lowering his voice, and speaking in an excited manner, "I believe there is some person on that hill making signals to us!"

CHAPTER IX.

INDIAN JIM ON A MISSION.

Just on the summit of the hill, at which the two were now intently gazing, they saw the limb of a tree swaying to the right and left, in a manner that made it manifest there were human means employed. The branch was moved so violently that it could scarcely fail to attract attention, were a person looking anywhere in that portion of the horizon. The artist produced his spy-glass, and scrutinized the suspicious object for a few moments without speaking.

"Can you make any thing definite of it?" asked his companion.

"When the limb moves to the right," replied Halleck, speaking slowly, and without lowering the glass, "I can get a glimpse of a head; but whether that of an Indian or a white man I can not tell. Suppose you look, Will?"

The young settler took the glass and looked long and earnestly, but was unable to satisfy himself of the identity of the person. He could make out the head and shoulders of the person, but the branch itself confused these so much that there could be no certainty regarding them. The young men had reined in their horses, and the man, convinced that he had caught their notice, waved the limb more vigorously than ever.

Adolphus Halleck took the glass again, and leveled it at the object, Brainerd remarking, as he did so:

"Let us go no nearer until certain of the identity of that man."

"He may be a poor refugee, broken down by long travel, and anxious for a lift."

"Why does he not come down the hill, then, and make himself known?"

"Can't tell; my curiosity is up, however, and I intend to learn the meaning of that movement before we go on."

"I am afraid it is a decoy. In all probability there are a lot of Indians concealed in the grass."

"Why don't they intercept us and head us off?"

"They haven't horses, and are lying down on the ground. They have no chance against our lives unless they can get us within rifle range, and that is what I believe they are attempting to do."

"We can't learn any thing so long as we stand here; we must go nearer."

Brainerd carefully measured the distance with his eye.

"We may go a hundred yards nearer, and run a slight chance of being shot. There are not many Indians who could pick us off from there, but I have known more than one Indian who was able."

Slowly and carefully they advanced toward the limb, until prudence led them to halt, and the artist once more raised his glass. At the very moment he did so, the limb was seen to fall to the ground, and no sign of a person was visible.

"What is the meaning of that?" he asked, turning to his companion.

"He is probably sure that we are coming to the top of the hill, and thinks it unnecessary to continue his signals."

"If that be the case, we can soon bring him to his feet again!"

The horsemen turned their animals' heads, and commenced moving away, as if they had concluded to pass on. There was scarcely time for such a disposition to manifest itself, when a loud holloa caught their attention, and, looking back, they saw an Indian, standing erect and waving his blanket toward them. The young men smiled significantly at each other.

"That means defiance," said Brainerd; "he is now seeking to draw us on by taunts and derisions."

"Let me bring him under the glass. I should love to get a good look at his countenance. I am sure I could remember it well enough to transfer it to paper, as soon as we have leisure."

The artist took a long, earnest look, and then suddenly dropped the instrument.

"I know that man, Will. Who do you suppose it is?"

"Little Crow, or Cut Nose, or some of those chiefs."

"It is Christian Jim."

The young settler would not credit this astounding intelligence until he had surveyed him himself through the powerful lens. Had any doubts remained, they were removed by Christian Jim descending the hill on a run, and coming toward them.

Our two friends prudently held their position, not offering to approach any closer, although certain it was a genuine friend who had signaled to them. The young settler was in a fever of anxiety to question him regarding his parents and friends.

"Where did you leave them, Jim?"

"Ten, twelve miles off yonder, in woods."

"And why are you here?"

"After you," he replied, with a singular expression of his dark countenance; "take me on horse, quick—*I-jin behind you!*"

Both cast an alarmed look behind them, but saw nothing unusual, and they looked enquiringly into the face of their friend again.

"They are off in de grass—dat is why I didn't come down the hill—don't like Farmer Indians."

They finally gathered from the Sioux, that he and his companions had journeyed a considerable distance over the prairie without any alarming adventure. They were excessively frightened, however, by discovering, a few hours after they started, that they were followed. They put their horses to their utmost speed, and either distanced their pursuers, or the latter drew off most probably in quest of more tempting plunder. The next day Christian Jim, whose sagacity and woodcraft were wonderful, announced that they had commenced their flight too late. The massacre was sweeping like a whirlwind as far east as Iowa, and the participants had already passed many miles beyond them; so that, properly speaking, they were not fleeing, but simply endeavoring to thread their way through this maze of dangers to a spot of safety.

They were hourly in danger of attack and massacre; but under the good providence of God, the skill of Christian Jim saved them. He detected "signs" constantly, and by timely foresight and precaution, avoided discovery. On one occasion, he drove the horses into a stream until the body of the wagon rested upon the surface of the water, and by this means escaped detection. The evidences of their enemies so multiplied around them, that they finally despaired of getting through in safety, even though guided by the matchless skill of the friendly Sioux.

Being positive of a collision, it was of the last importance that they should master all the defensible force possible. Into the deepest recesses of a dense grove of timber, they managed to penetrate for some distance, when the Sioux contrived to obliterate all traces of their entrance, and left them with the injunction not to move, under any circumstances, until his return. He then made all haste in quest of Halleck and young Brainerd.

On the summit of the hill to which we have referred, he descried them approaching, and lay down in the grass in the hope that they would pass near him. He soon discovered

that their course would lead them far to the left, and was on the point of descending to meet them, when, to his surprise, he discerned directly in their rear, a body of mounted Indians, who were, beyond all doubt, among the principals of the massacre. He expected momentarily that they would dash after the whites. His own safety demanded that he should conceal his identity, even from them, until he could make himself known to his friends. In case of their capture, he might have passed himself off as one of the savage Indians, but, he was so well known that it was an extremely dangerous experiment.

It took Christian Jim, even with his broken sentences, a much shorter time to explain this to his friends. Ere he had finished, young Brainerd took him upon his horse, and all three looked back, half expecting the mounted Indians to dash after them; but, they must have discovered other signs in the horizon; for, after wheeling and circling around on the prairie for a few moments, they came to a halt, the heads of their animals pointing to the west. The next moment, with a shout that sounded distinct in the still air, they dashed away at full speed, and shortly after disappeared from view altogether.

The heat of the atmosphere by this time was most trying, both to man and beast. The air quivered and trembled; there was that suffocating sultriness so peculiar to the month of August. But, the young men scarcely felt this, and would have urged their animals to their utmost speed, had not Christian Jim restrained them.

"The way is long—the horses will fall down."

"But we must reach them—we can not lose time," urged Brainerd, disposed to be a little mutinous, despite his unlimited confidence in the wisdom and discretion of his dusky comrade. "They may need our assistance this very moment."

"Can't help dat."

"Do you really think they are safe?"

"Dey are in the Great Father's hands!" replied the Sioux with a solemnity that went to the hearts of both listeners.

"We know that, Jim," said Brainerd, after a moment's pause; "yet, we cannot expect Him to step aside to favor them. We must do our utmost, and even that may prove unavailing."

"The Great Father does that which He thinks best."

"Tell me what you think of their situation—of the chances of being discovered by their foes."

"Me think 'em safe. Can't see dem if keep in woods."

"But, the wagon and the hoofs of the horses must make a very plain trail. The eyes of the red men are sharp, and they see things that would escape our eyes."

"Dey are not sharp *now*, but are filled with the sight of women, and of babes, and of plunder. De devil got into dere hearts, and dey do not know what dey do."

"You can place no reliance upon these vagabond, wandering Indians," remarked the artist, who, up to this time, had spoken scarcely a word. "The warriors, the true aborigines, are honorable and chivalrous in their warfare, are they not, Jim?"

The Sioux's look showed that he failed to comprehend the question, and the artist ventured to explain:

"Your warriors—that is, your *real* Indians—are not such bad men; they are kinder and more considerate in their manner of waging war."

"Don't know de chaps," replied Jim, turning his head away.

"You'll have to provide yourself with a microscope, 'Dolph, if you wish to discover these phenomena; for, you see, they are not visible to the naked eye."

The artist smiled with an air of assurance, as if his faith still remained unshaken, although, if the truth be told, he had come to believe, by this time, that the numbers of vagabond Indians were terribly on the increase.

The impatience of the young settler would not allow his horse to walk, and the two accordingly kept along upon a moderate canter, although the exertion caused the animals to pant and perspire in an alarming manner. The Sioux changed from one to the other, at intervals, so as to equalize the burden. He announced that they would reach the encamping place of their friends at about sunset, should nothing unexpected prevent them.

He had hardly made this announcement, when he uttered a grunt of displeasure.

"What is the matter, now?" asked Brainerd, upon whose horse the savage was riding.

"Ooghl Injin!" he replied, pointing off to the northern horizon.

Turning their eyes in the direction indicated, the young men saw what appeared to be a drove of wild animals hurrying over the prairie. They seemed frightened, and were running at such a rate that a cloud of dust marked their progress. To the unassisted eyes of the whites, there was scarcely anything at all visible. The glass of the artist, however, revealed the forms of several horsemen, apparently occupied in driving them.

"Injins driving cattle!" added the Sioux.

"What direction are they following?"

"Coming at us—come by here."

"It's my private opinion, then, that we should be doing a wise thing by getting out of the range of observation. No doubt they are well mounted, and our horses are too exhausted to give us much confidence in them."

But a difficulty now arose. To escape this new danger, by a detour upon the prairies, would carry them so far out of their course that there was great doubt of reaching their friends before nightfall—a thing which all were equally anxious to avoid.

A few moments' survey settled beyond dispute that the Indians were coming directly toward them. Riding a few hundred yards further, so as to be out of their range, our friends dismounted, and made their horses lie down, while they knelt beside them. By this time, the strangers had approached so close that young Brainerd half believed they had been discovered.

But the danger passed. A dozen or so of oxen and cattle, prancing and bellowing, came tumultuously forward, while some eight or ten Indians, shouting like madmen, goaded them on. Had they not been occupied in this manner, it is hardly probable our friends would have escaped discovery. They crouched low down in the grass, holding the heads of their animals flat against the ground, and keeping their rifles ready for use at a second's warning.

Not until they were but moving specks in the distance, would the Sioux allow his friends to remount and move on again. The afternoon by this time was well advanced, and a

pleasant breeze was sweeping over the prairie. Far away to the east, outlined in the misty blue of the horizon, a large grove of timber was visible. It was here that Uncle John, his wife, daughter, and Marian Allondale were anxiously awaiting the coming of their friends.

"If a lot of the vagabond Indians should strike upon the trail of the wagon, they might take it into their heads to follow it," said the artist, "in that case, we have no time to lose."

"Such a thing may occur, but the chances are that it will not. At such a time as this, when fugitives are fleeing in every direction, there is too much work at hand for the savages to seek it. What I most fear is, that a party may encamp in the woods, and discover them, or they may become alarmed and attempt to flee."

Distance upon the prairie is as deceptive as upon the ocean, and the approach of our friends to the grove of woods, seemed so tardy and snail-like, that Brainerd frequently lost patience, and resolved to put his horse to a full run. The prudent counsels of Christian Jim, however, prevailed, and he carefully husbanded the strength of his animal.

Three separate "signs" were distinguished, but they were at such a distance as to excite little apprehension. Our friends were given a foretaste of what was in store for them, in case they were captured, by the sights which occasionally greeted them. The ghastly, swollen corpses of animals and men, disfigured by all manner of mutilation—infants torn limb from limb, and females so brutally torn and outraged, as to be too revolting for description—all these caused them to shudder to their very souls, and to tremble for the safety of those loved ones who were so anxiously awaiting their coming.

The artist, with a pertinacity that was remarkable, if not foolish, animadverted at such times upon the cruelty of wandering, vagabond Indians, and lamented that the genuine American aborigine was not engaged in the war. The continued monotonous gallop over the prairie, appeared to drive the anxiety from his mind; for, when they had gained a position that afforded an extensive view of the landscape, he expressed a wish to transfer it to paper. A sharp rebuke from Brainerd served to recall him to his senses.

The sun was sinking in the horizon, when they came so close to the grove, as to drop their horses to a walk, in order to give their guide an opportunity to reconnoiter it, to ascertain whether there were any evidences of other persons than those they were seeking, being there.

The Sioux's feet had barely touched ground, and he had cast but one searching glance toward the grove, when he gave utterance to a suppressed exclamation of surprise. In answer to the inquiry of Brainerd, he pointed above the top of the trees, as the place where he had discovered signs of some disagreeable thing. So faint as to be invisible, unless their eyes were directed toward it, they discovered a faint, thin column of smoke making its way perpendicularly upward, until lost in the clear air.

It is impossible to describe the tumult of emotions that this instantly caused in the two young men. To the nervous young settler, it was proof positive that all of his friends were in the hands of the barbarous savages. In imagination, he saw his dying parents, his outraged and struggling sister, and Marian, and he closed his eyes to the sickening scene. His first feeling was that of terror and despair; his next a furious desire to dash into the wood, and either save or die with these cherished friends.

The artist could hardly believe the "vagabond" Indians had penetrated thus far, and he examined his revolver to be sure that it would not fail him in the hour of need. It was impossible to tell from the look and manner of the Sioux whether he regarded the case of his friends as about hopeless, or whether he had suspicions that this fire was kindled by the whites themselves. He would answer no questions, until he had examined the woods himself.

Instructing the horsemen to retire to a safe distance, he commenced making his way through the tall prairie grass, toward the upper end of the wood, so as to be sure of approaching the camp fire from an unexpected direction.

CHAPTER X.

THE NIGHT IN THE WOOD.

THE Sioux exercised more than usual care in approaching the grove. The tall waving grass was favorable, while his great skill enabled him to progress with unerring certainty to a point several hundred yards north of where he left the horsemen. Comparatively slight as was the distance thus passed over, it fully occupied three-fourths of an hour, and at the moment of entering the wood, night had fairly settled over the prairie.

The Indian had formed his own opinion regarding the camp-fire. He could not believe that it had been kindled by his friends; the warmth of this August afternoon, and the horror they had of attracting the attention of their mortal enemies, forbade any such course. Had Uncle John possessed another wife, she might have been strong-minded enough to insist upon such a proceeding; but Christian Jim knew Mrs. Brainerd too well to expect any such thing from her. Therefore the friendly Sioux was filled with perhaps as keen and tormenting an apprehension as those who were already awaiting his return with such impatience.

But not for a single instant did his look or manner betray any such emotion. His life and experience among his own race, had taught him to be circumspect and suspicious; and he had learned long ago, that the moment of apparently the greatest calm and security, is in reality that of the closest impending danger. When he finally emerged from the long, prairie grass, and in a stooping position, whisked beneath the shadow of the wood, his movement would have hardly attracted the attention of a sentinel within a dozen feet of him. A shadow or a phantom, would scarcely have moved so rapidly and noiselessly.

Fairly within the grove, the first proceeding of Christian Jim was to bend his head, and concentrate all his faculties into the single one of hearing. Not even a falling leaf caught his ear—nothing except the mournful sighing of the night

wind through the tree-tops. He either had no enemies to encounter, or they were as cautious as himself.

Moving a few yards further, he caught the dull glimmer of the camp-fire through the trees. One glance showed him that it had not been replenished for several hours, and half suspecting the truth, he proceeded with greater rapidity through the grove. A few moments later, he stood within a rod of the smouldering embers, and made the discovery that yet another human being was near him.

Gratifying as this fact might be, it had a bearing which filled Christian Jim with more distressing anxiety than he had yet experienced. He was now almost positive that a party of Indians had encamped in the grove, and captured his friends several hours before. Reconnoitering the camp-fire a few moments, to make sure that there could be no enemy at hand, he passed on by it, toward the point where the wagon had been driven in the day before.

The Sioux was too much of a woodsman to mistake the locality. Words will not describe his feelings when he found that it was gone! He stood for a moment, completely overcome by this dreadful discovery. Then, as there was no further need of caution, he passed out upon the prairie, and whistled to his friends to approach. A moment later, they galloped up beside him.

"Where are they?" breathlessly demanded Brainerd.

"I can't say—God knows," answered the Indian.

"Oh, my heavens! is it possible?" wailed the young man, almost falling from his horse. In a moment, he recovered himself, and asked:

"Where was it you left them, Jim?"

"In there—right by us."

"Are there no signs of the savages?"

"Too dark—can't see trail."

"But you are sure, Jim, these vagabond Indians have captured them?" asked the artist, dismounting from his horse.

"Don't know—but think so."

"Why are you dismounting, Will?"

"I believe they are in the wood, and am going to search for them."

Hopeless as this almost seemed, it yet afforded some relief.

and the young man hastened to join him. The Indian regarded their actions with a stolid indifference.

"There is no need of going together," said the artist, "you take the right direction, and I will go the left. A half hour, I think, will decide the matter. I will expect you here at that time."

"What do you intend to do, Jim?"

"Wait for you—soon be here again."

In an indescribable tumult of emotion, Brainerd entered the wood. He had scarcely penetrated into its sylvan gloom when a singular feeling came over him. He felt positive that ere his search was finished, he was going to make some discovery—one that intimately concerned his own life and happiness. He trembled excessively, and it was several moments before he could gain sufficient control of himself to proceed.

Forcing down his distressing feelings, he groped forward, now pausing and listening, then starting at the throbbing of his own heart, or the whirr of some bird overhead, or the soft rustle of the wind. In this manner, he penetrated several hundred yards, and occupying full a half hour in doing so, without discovering any thing positive or tangible.

Again he paused, and nothing rewarded the acute attention. He moved on, and then halted, for, there, directly before him, stood the wagon! Although, as we have shown, he had progressed a considerable distance, still he was but a rod or so from the edge of the wood, so that the wagon could have been easily forced into this position.

To convince himself there was no illusion, young Brainerd reached out his hand and placed it upon the wheel. The cold touch of the tire, was proof positive that he was not mistaken.

"Father, father, mother, dear mother, are you there in the wagon?"

No reply followed this agonizing question, and unable to contain himself, he sprung into the wagon. A dark object near the front, caught his eye. It felt soft beneath his touch. It was a bundle merely; there was nothing else there—even the seats being gone.

Young Brainerd then went over the fore part of the wagon. Both horses were gone. Sick at heart, he pressed his hands

to his forehead, as if to prevent the distressing thoughts from setting his brain on fire. What could all this mean? What had become of those loved ones for whom he was seeking? Had the fenlish red-men been here?

His first impulse was to hurry back after Christian Jim; but his impatience would not permit it. No; he must prosecute this hunt, until something definite was ascertained. He groped around upon the ground, expecting each moment to encounter some dead body. It was too dark for him to see any thing, but his hands entered the indentations made by the horses' hoofs. They were numerous and close together; and to his overstrained mind, this was certain evidence that they had struggled furiously with some one. Both were fiery, and high-mettled, and would not have submitted tamely to the approach of a stranger.

Searching, thus blindly, without learning any thing more, he paused, rose to the upright position, and, drawing a bunch of matches from his pocket, ignited one, in the hope that its feeble glare would reveal something to him. Its momentary and feeble blaze served to reveal the towering trees around him, their luxuriant foliage, heavy and still, and the gloomy recesses beyond; but he saw nothing more.

Just as the tiny ember twinkled out in his fingers, he heard a sigh—a deep, long-drawn breath, as if the person making it, was pressed down by an overwhelming weight. Young Brainerd was wrought up to that pitch, that he was ready to imagine any thing, and he could not have been more frightened, had a whole troop of phantoms gathered around him; still, the great, shivering terror which possessed him entire was borne down and kept under, by his agonizing anxiety for his dearest friends. He was just in that state of mind, when he would have forced himself face to face with the Dark Angel himself.

The excessive fear of the young man did not prevent him from noting the direction from which the sigh came. To make assurance doubly sure, he bent his head and listened again, but he could detect nothing. That painful, deep-drawn sigh, that had sounded so deliberate, and yet so sudden and distinct, was all; there was nothing more, but it seemed as if he could still hear that

Nerving himself, he walked directly toward the point from which the sound came. Though he moved unhesitatingly, it was still cautiously.

All at once, he struck some object and fell headlong over it. He heard it struggle to its feet, and then saw it was one of the horses that had been sleeping. Near by, was the other.

"Father, mother, dear mother, speak, if you are here!"

"Why, I declare, William, is that you. We took you for some thievish red-skin."

A dark figure approached through the gloom; then another, and another, and still another; until all stood around him.

"Oh, father! are any of you hurt?"

He grasped the hand and rung it, and then fell weeping upon the neck of his mother; then he embraced his sister, and Marian dropped almost lifeless in his arms.

"Oh, Marian, *dearest* Marian!" he whispered, as he pressed her fondly to his breast. "Now I thank God for this! Are you all unharmed?"

"Every one of us! every one of us! Are you and Adolphus unhurt?"

"We are safe; but we had despaired of you."

"How came you to change your position?"

"There have been a confounded lot of Indians encamped in this wood, nearly all day, and we came here to keep out of their sight. Thank God, they never suspected our presence. And where is 'Dolph and Jim?"

"Just on the edge of the wood. I will call to them."

It needed but a single signal, when they both were heard approaching. We need scarcely mention the astonishment of the Sioux and the artist. The latter was affected almost as much as young Brainerd. He shook all fervently by the hand securing Maggie for the last. Her he drew to him, and with the assurance of old, kissed her cold cheek.

Hasty questions were propounded and answered, and the old man was informed of the burning of his house.

"Who cares? who cares?" exclaimed Uncle John, in his hearty, genial voice. "We have our lives, and that is enough. I have made my fortune twice, and am not too old to try again."

"We are not out of the woods, as yet," said Brainerd: "are we not losing time?"

"It seems to me that the night is too dark," said Mrs Brainerd. "Let us remain here until morning. We may lose our way, and perhaps get miles astray before daylight."

"Ah! Jim, there, is a guide, that can't be mistaken," said Uncle John. "He has traveled the prairies too long to lose his way. What do you think about moving, Jim?"

"Stay here till mornin'," he replied. "Go back to wagon -- women stay in dere."

Start when they might, it would be necessary to make a great deal of the journey during the daytime, and a few hours could not greatly increase the number of hostile Indians between themselves and St. Paul, while the respite of rest that would thus be afforded, would be of incalculable benefit.

Accordingly, the entire party took their way back to the wagon. Blankets were spread in the body of this, and quite comfortable arrangements made for the females, while the men found no unpleasant shelter, on this warm August night, beneath the trees, with such covering as they had with them.

Although there seemed scarcely any possibility of danger impending, the habits of the Sioux forbade him to close his eyes in slumber so long as the rest remained unconscious.

At the first streak of sunlight through the trees, Uncle John and his family were awake and astir. The artist, accustomed to the habits of city life, would have slumbered several hours longer, had they not awakened him.

Anxious as all were to be on their way, there was not one of their number, unless it might have been the artist, who would willingly have omitted, or shortened their morning devotions. Uncle John read a chapter from the Bible of the latter, and then all knelt upon the green turf, and the prayer ascended to Him whose ears are never closed to the supplication of the needy:

"We felt that we were fellow men,
We felt we were a band,
Sustained here in the wilderness
By Heaven's upholding hand."

Christian Jim seemed unusually impressed, and gave frequent utterance to ejaculations and exclamations. His "untutored mind" had long since learned of the mercy and kindness of his Heavenly Father, and he could never forget his dependence upon him.

The prayer being finished, all partook of the morning meal, which, though cold, was none the less relished. By this, the sun was well up in the sky, and it was high time the refugees were upon their way. It was a work of considerable difficulty to get the wagon to the edge of the wood; but they succeeded, and the horses were quickly harnessed, and all ready to start. Before doing so, the Sioux took a careful observation of the prairie. Reporting it clear of immediate danger, the little party once more turned their face toward St. Paul, and moved forward.

CHAPTER XI.

IN CLOSE QUARTERS.

As it was very probable that the utmost speed and endurance of the horses would be needed ere nightfall, our friends wisely concluded to husband their strength. Accordingly, as they rode out from the wood, it was upon a moderate walk. The Sioux had taken his position in the front of the wagon, directly beside Uncle John, who managed the reins with the skill of a veteran at the business. The Indian stood upon his feet continually, his black, restless eyes flitting hither and thither, on the constant alert for danger.

The artist rode beside the wagon, close to where Maggie was seated. Since the reunion of the evening before, he had manifested a strong preference for her society. She, upon her part, seemed unusually grave and thoughtful. The appalling dangers that had constantly threatened them, late, for the time, driven all gaiety from her disposition. Occasionally, the odd humor of Uncle John would peep out in some remark, and, at rare intervals, the sharp wit and silvery laugh of Marian were heard. But these were only spasmodic reactions of a genial temperament, pressed down by doubt and gloom. The faces of all were sad and thoughtful.

Marian and young Brainerd entered into a conversation at

one side of the wagon, while Maggie and the artist did the same upon the opposite.

"What is your opinion of the Minnesota Indians in general?" asked Maggie, with a sly look at her friend.

"I think there are a confounded lot of vagabonds among them, at any rate."

"Don't you think the majority are bad men?"

"Well, I don't know. Can't say but what I do," he answered, with a smiling reluctance.

"You are disappointed, then, in what you fancied them to be? Come, now, be frank, and say what you really think."

"Yes, Maggie, I admit that I am; but I still do not despair of finding some noble specimens among them."

"You express a great admiration for the Indian character," continued Maggie, with a fluent earnestness that surprised no one more than herself. "Do you admire it enough to endeavor to elevate and improve it? Could you forsake the comforts of civilization, to live and preach to those dying heathen?"

"I think it would be better if some one should first preach to me," laughed the artist.

"And you are thinking all the while that it is being done now," she smiled. "You must pardon me, if my anxiety makes me seem forward, but I must speak what I feel. We are standing on the very precipice of death, liable to fall over every moment, and is it right that we should be trifling and thoughtless?"

"You ought to be a missionary's wife, Maggie, for I believe you are as near a saint as it is possible to be."

The girl was about to reply, when an exclamation from Christian Jim arrested the attention of all. He was standing as usual, in the wagon, and, from his manner, some object, very nearly ahead of him, had caught his attention.

"What do you make of it?" inquired Uncle John.

"Farm house," replied the Sioux.

The top of the buildings and trees were visible to all, and the animals were put upon a trot, which rapidly lessened the intervening distance. The forenoon was considerably advanced, and it was agreed that a pause should be made at the farm house for an hour or so.

The house was, apparently, that of a well-to-do settler, and had been erected several years before. It stood beside a stream of considerable size, and possessed all the necessary outbuildings. Young Brainerd noticed a peculiar expression of the Sioux's face, as they neared the house. He kept his eye fixed upon it, as though he suspected all was not right. Finally, when a hundred yards distant, he told all to halt. In answer to the inquiring looks of all, he asked the meaning question :

“Where be the people?”

There was an unnatural air of stillness around the place—an absence of life that might well occasion the question just uttered. The principal door was wide open, as if left thus by some person in entering, and there was nothing unusual, except the deathlike quiet to which we have already referred. The hour suggested that, perhaps, they might be at dinner, and Uncle John ventured to remark as much.

“Tink Injun been dar,” replied the Sioux, with a shake of his head. “We see,” he added, springing out of the wagon and running toward the gate.

Young Brainerd and the artist had already dismounted, and did the same. Christian Jim was the first to enter, and, as he did so, the two young men saw him quail, as though some startling object had met his eye. A moment later, they were beside him.

Directly in the center of the floor, lay a middle-aged man, evidently the father of the family, who had been tomahawked, and but a few feet distant was a woman, who had been butchered in a still more horrible manner. Clasped to her breast was a child, from which the life had been beaten out; while, with his head in the smoldering smoke of the fire-place, lay a small boy, lacerated and bleeding, like those around him. All were dead and cold.

Indians had, indeed, been there, and the hearts of the young men grew sick at the sight. The furniture, around the room, bore marks of a violent struggle. The father had not yielded up his life, and the lives of those around him, without a powerful resistance, as did too many horror-stricken men during that dreadful massacre. In his clenched hands were threads of long, wiry, black hair, that had been torn from the heads

of his Indian opponents. But he had been taken at great disadvantage, and was obliged to succumb to superior power and numbers.

"Why did they not burn the house?" asked the artist, who had recovered from his first shock, and was now busy sketching the scene before him.

"Too much hurry—had no time—'feared soldiers come."

"Are there any soldiers in this neighborhood?" inquired young Brainerd.

"Dunno—can't say—maybe so."

"It is a bloody piece of business, at any rate, and it is my opinion that if these vagabonds—"

The reports of several rifles broke upon their ears. The Indian sprung to the door with the quickness of lightning. The two men were scarce a moment behind him. They saw fully a dozen Indians around the wagon, struggling with those within it. The horses had been shot dead, but Uncle John was making a determined resistance. Marian, Maggie, and Mrs. Brainerd, were already in the grasp of the painted savages, who held them upon their horses. Uncle John stood at bay in the front of the wagon, with the board, which had served as a seat, brandished aloft. He brought it down, with crushing force, upon the head of more than one; but a treacherous villain in his rear, raised aloft his deadly tomahawk. It was still above his head, when a bullet from the infallible rifle of Jim, laid him low. At the same moment, Uncle John was seen to fall, and the Indians would undoubtedly have finished him, had not this unexpected shot in their midst, called them away to confront the new danger that threatened them.

At the moment, the two young men comprehended the situation of affairs, they started to rush to the rescue of their friends; but the Sioux, with his brow as black as a thunder cloud, hurled them back.

"Stay dere; kill you, too—take scalp—make big fool!"

"Let us go!" exclaimed young Brainerd; "are we to stand and see our friends murdered?"

"Stay here—can't do good out dere—shoot from house."

Setting the example, the Indian raised his rifle, and, aiming through the open door, dispatched the savage who was on the

point of slaying Uncle John. By this time, the young men comprehended the wisdom of what their dasky friend had told them, and, catching up their rifles, eagerly awaited an opportunity to do some execution with him.

The savages, as we have before intimated, upon receiving the rifle-shot of the Sioux into their midst, immediately turned to attend to the new phase in the drama, which it inevitably portended. They were not aware of any one being in the farm house, until apprised of it in the manner related.

The three Indians holding the captives immediately filed off to the north-east, while the others advanced rapidly, but with due caution, toward the house. Ere they had passed over one half the intervening distance, Christian Jim had re-loaded his piece, and the three discharged their guns simultaneously through the door. If the first shot had been astonishing, these were astounding. Unfortunately, however, that of Christian Jim only was fatal, the over-eagerness of the others spoiling their aim. But they convinced the advancing Indians that the attempt to capture or slay those within, to use a common expression, "wouldn't pay." The shots into their midst meant that unmistakably. They immediately fell back, with every appearance of moving away altogether.

"Load, quick!" admonished Christian Jim; "go to wagon—kill Uncle John."

Such, indeed, appeared to be their intention, for two immediately separated from the others, and made their way to the wagon, where the occupant was still invisible. The keen eye of the Indian watched their movements, as the eagle watches its prey. One was a yard or two in advance of the other, and he was the first to fall from his horse to the ground. The second, appalled by this, turned off to the left, and rejoined his companions, not, however, before he had raised himself upon his horse, and hurled his tom-dawk into the wagon. This deviation in his course saved his life, for, notwithstanding the tempting target he offered, the young men restrained their fire, in order to be prepared for any unexpected move upon their part.

The three who held the captives, after moving several hundred yards or so, reined up their horses, and awaited the approach of the others. Being rejoined by them, the whole

party took a north-east direction, and, striking their animals into a sweeping gallop, left our three friends entirely to themselves.

Had it been possible for the artist to have sketched his own likeness, and that of his two companions, at this particular juncture, it would have earned him more fame than anything he had as yet essayed. The Sioux, grim, silent and thoughtful, stood, like a statue, gazing through the door at the departing savages; young Brainerd, pale and dejected, with an air of the most hopeless despair, had dropped into the scene, while the artist himself had the appearance of a man who was in the greatest dilemma of his life.

For the moment, all thoughts of Mr. Brainerd had passed from their minds. They quickly returned, when they saw him shove himself out of the rear of the wagon, and come, on a rapid run, toward them.

"Ain't you hurt, father?" asked young Brainerd, hurrying to meet him.

"Not a bit; but, my God! what will become of them all in the hands of the Indians?"

"I can't tell! I can't tell!"

"How are your two horses? mine are shot dead. Can't we mount and chase them? Tell me, Jim!"

The Sioux shook his head.

"Never catch 'em; maybe keep dem. General Sibley git him agin; maybe won't kill."

"Oh, heaven! look at this work around us! Doesn't this tell what their fate will be? There is no use! there is no use!"

As the father, completely overcome, with the tears standing in his eyes, and an expression of the most agonizing pain on his face, sunk down into a seat, the Christian Indian turned full around, and looked at him. Then, in the softest tone of his musical voice, he said, "Brother!" The man looked up. "Is dere no help?"

And then the Indian slowly raised his hand, and pointed straight upward. At the same time, his gaze followed the direction of his finger, and then, with his harsh countenance softened into an expression of the most humble and trusting meekness, he added, "Please, good Heavenly Father, don't forget us now!"

The effect was wonderful. The countenances of the father and son lightened up, and the former said:

"With shame I confess, Jim, you have taught me my duty. God only is our refuge in time of trouble. How truly we feel it when the trouble is upon us. Let us lose not another moment."

The four sunk upon their knees.

CHAPTER XII.

RELIEF AND REPOSE.

THE words of supplication were still lingering in the mouth of the father, when the sound of horses' feet were heard. They rapidly approached, and suddenly the clear, ringing voice of a man shouted "Halt!" By this time, our friends had made their way to the door, where they saw eight horsemen, led by a man in the United States uniform.

"Hello, there!" he called. "What's the news?"

"As he spoke he dismounted, and made his way into the house.

"Have you seen any thing of a pack of the painted demons? They have been playing particular devil in the neighborhood. Hello! they have been to work here, eh? You have got a prisoner, I see? Our motto is to show no mercy to such rascals; so here goes!"

Young Brainerd had barely time to knock up the revolver of the officer, when it was discharged, and the bullet passed above the head of the unmoved Indian.

"Don't harm a hair of his head. He is the best friend we have."

"Don't say—glad to hear it—like to have been too late to save his picture. Who is he?"

"Christian Jim, a Sioux Indian, who has been a valuable friend to us, in our trouble."

"All right, but you hain't answered my first question. Do you know any thing of that pack of savages I asked you about?"

"You have hardly afforded time," said young Brainerd, and thereupon he proceeded to give an account of what has been related in the few preceding pages. During the narrative, the cavalry officer took a huge chew of tobacco, and offered the plug to Christian Jim. It seemed impossible to surprise him. He took every thing as a matter of course. The truth of the case was, he was a "veteran" in the service, who had chanced to be out in Minnesota, collecting recruits at the time of the massacre. The episode of chasing the Indian was a pleasant sport to him, and he entered into it with the grim gusto of an experienced soldier.

"I've hunted guerrillas before," said he, when the narration was finished, "and I'll smoke them dogs out, as sure as you're born. They won't get me in any of their confounded traps either, for I've learnt a thing or two, since I've been in the service."

He was very voluble and his remarks (as we are sorry to say is the case with too many of his brother officers,) were interspersed with all sorts of oaths. While speaking, he was generally spitting, or employed in shoving away his enormous moustache from his upper lip. There was a familiar impudence, and a cool assumption of authority in his manner, that was far from displeasing. As it was, our friends looked upon him as a deliverer sent by God in answer to their petition, and it is needless to say that they felt the strongest friendship toward him. He waited until every thing had been told him, and then he ejected another mouthful of tobacco juice, and said:

"Well, all we've got to do is to hunt 'em down, and git the gals back. My men, although rather green soldiers, have seen something of this kind of work before, and I think we can make a neat job of it. The question I want to ask, is whether that piece of coppery beauty there, couldn't afford us a little assistance?"

Christian Jim made no reply, until directly appealed to and then his answer was rather dubious:

"Dunno."

"Don't know?" repeated the Captain; "then I know. When we wanted to hunt seecesh or guerrillas down in Virginia, we managed to get hold of some of their contrabands to lead us to their holes. So, if we want to hunt red skins, we must

take a red-skin to guide us, and you're the identical beauty we want."

The two horses ridden by the young men were wandering over the prairie, snuffing the air, as if they scented danger, while those of the fallen Indians, curiously enough, had not been taken away by their surviving companions. These, after considerable difficulty, were captured by the horsemen, and our friends were soon well mounted.

It was now considerably advanced in the afternoon, and as it was all-important that the Sioux should be overtaken before nightfall, no time was lost in unnecessary delay. The prairie, interspersed as it was with hills, streams, and woods, made it possible that the whole party of Indians might be but a short distance away, although they had disappeared for some time from sight. Still, it was hardly probable, and Christian Jim proceeded on that supposition.

A half hour's sweeping gallop brought them to quite an elevation, over which the party had disappeared, and beyond this, our friends forded quite a considerable stream, upon the shore of which, they discovered certain evidences of the presence of those for whom they were seeking. Beyond this, they found quite another stretch of open prairie, when they reached a large portion of timber.

As they approached, the friendly Indian slackened his pace and kept his eye fixed steadily upon the wood, in quest of some sign of his kindred, but discovered nothing. Still, this was no proof they were not there, and he accordingly dismounted, while yet a considerable distance away, and stealthily approached it on foot.

A half hour later, the party descried him upon the edge of the wood, beckoning them to approach. "Ain't in dere?" said he, as he remounted his animal and continued the pursuit. Less than a mile from the grove of timber, was distinguishable a second and smaller one, of which, it was very soon evident, the Sioux entertained the strongest suspicions. The company reined in their steeds, when fully a quarter of a mile away, and the Indian, as before, advanced upon foot, to examine it before approaching in a body.

Our friends anxiously awaited some signal from their guide, for those acquainted with him were certain there would be

something learned of those whom they were seeking. They had hardly begun to look for him, when he reappeared at the precise point where he had entered, and signaled for them to advance. He continued his gesticulations, as a warning for them to exercise the utmost caution; and as the party came up, they needed not his assurance, to understand that their prey had been discovered.

"Don't trick me, here!" was the gratifying announcement of Christian Jim. "Don't make noise, den Injin kill! de gals"

The sun was in the horizon, and the cavalry were anxious to finish their work before nightfall. Their voluble leader chewed and spit more vigorously than ever, seemingly hardly able to repress his jubilant feelings at the certainty of a collision. Uncle John, Halleck, and young Brainerd, were fearfully excited, for they knew there was a danger worse than death impending over these loved ones.

The entire party dismounted, and cautiously made their way through the wood. The Indians had not the slightest suspicion of pursuit, or they would not have permitted an enemy to come upon them in this manner. At the moment our friends discovered them, they were in the act of remounting, and were thus caught at a great disadvantage. "Fire and charge 'em, boys!" shouted the officer, who assumed control of his men, now that the conflict had begun.

Every one of the whites discharged his piece, and only four Indians remained upon their horses. One of these held Maggie, seeing which, Halleck advanced toward him with his drawn revolver.

"Drop her, you painted devil!" he shouted, fairly hoarse with passion. The Sioux, seeing there was no escape for himself, whipped out his knife, and plunging it into the back of the defenseless girl, let her fall to the ground, and then, calmly folding his arms, awaited his doom!

It came instantly. Infuriated beyond all measure, by the treacherous murder he had just witnessed, Halleck discharged his revolver directly into the breast of the savage; and after he had fallen, as rapidly as he could pull the trigger, dispatched the other five into the same dark bosom of sin and crime.

The assassination of the poor girl had been witnessed by all, and the last shot of the artist's revolver had scarce been

discharged, when the entire party were gathered around her. Neither Mrs. Brainerd nor Marian had suffered harm or insult, but the daughter was beyond all human remedy.

This was manifest to every one, and the agonized mother lifted her head upon her knee, that her last moments might be as unruffled as it was in her power to make them. Maggie was dying far more rapidly than any present imagined. The noticed her turn deadly pale; and as each stooped over and kissed her, she smiled and attempted to speak, but was unable. The father, brother, and Marian embraced her again and again, until the latter saw her turn a significant look toward Haffack. Instantly, all withdrew and gave place to him. He sank down upon his knees, and kissed her in turn.

“Yes; seek me—meet me—”

The silver cord was loosened, the golden bowl was broken.

The second day after the events just narrated, a small party could be seen a few miles to the west of St. Paul. There was the wagon with which our readers are familiar, two saddle-horses drawing it, while within were seated the disconsolate father and mother, the brother, the artist, and Marian Allondale. The body of Maggie had been buried in the woods, much as her friends wished to bring it with them; for the warmth and humidity of the atmosphere forbade such a proceeding. The cavalry and Christian Jim had accompanied our friends, until assured that they were beyond all danger; when, as they knew their services were in imminent need, they turned back toward the immediate scene of the massacre, in the hope that they might do something toward staying that tide of passion that was sweeping like a storm over the fair plains of the young State.

It was toward the close of the day, and the party passed, more to refresh the animals than any thing else. They were sad and gloomy enough. The artist was unusually solemn, while Maria, like those of her nature, now that she was not joyous and overflowing with exuberant spirits, was doubly desponding.

The cousins, arm-in-arm, slowly walked away from the others, who had seated themselves upon the ground. The artist was the first to break the silence.

"Can we ever forget her?"

The handkerchief went to the eyes of Marian, at this fresh burst of sorrow. It was some moments before she could speak.

"I hope that God will make me as good as her. What an example of goodness and purity."

It was now the turn of Halleck to cover his own eyes. He could not keep back the tears.

"By the grace of God, I shall meet her above. The loss of my brother never affected me as did her loss."

He spoke with singular pathos and earnestness.

"She loved you."

"Do you think so?"

"I *know* so."

The artist was silent for a few moments. Then, as he swallowed the grief that was threatening to choke him, he said:

"Dear Marian, this is an hour when there should be no deception between us. If Maggie loved me, I loved her."

"I know it, and honor you for it."

"You love Will Brainerd, do you not? Don't hesitate, Marian, for let there be perfect confidence between us."

"I have never told *him* so, but I confess it to you."

"And he loves you, with the whole ardor of his heart. He is a noble fellow, and I shall rejoice in my very soul to see him your husband. You and I have been engaged for a half-dozen years, but we have never loved each other. We hold the strongest esteem and friendship for and trust in each other; but I do not feel to you as I did to Maggie, nor do you entertain the same emotions toward me that you do toward Will? Is it not so, Marian?"

He looked down in her face; silence and tears were the reply.

"Let this engagement that we made, or was made for us, end. We shall always be brother and sister, but never man and wife. Do you wish it thus?"

Silence and tears were the only response. The moment was so solemn, that her woman's nature was weighed down with its weight of mingled pain and bliss. He touched his lips to her forehead, almost gayly, and said:

"Let us go back; for Will may not understand the meaning of this."

But the young man understood it all, before many months elapsed.

Mr. and Mrs. Brainerd, and their son and daughter, are yet within the State of Minnesota. They have begun life again in a section where they can feel secure from the fury of the treacherous red-men. The memory of the sainted Maggie dwells like a guardian spirit within their dwelling; and to-day, as the once fashionable and frivolous Adolphus Haller gives himself into the great, solemn truths of the Bible, in his preparation for the sacred ministry; as he almost faints at times in his efforts to "crucify" the flesh, and walk closely beside his chosen Saviour; as he rises from his knees, he sees a pale, sweet face smiling upon him, and beckoning him on in the hallowed work which he has laid out for himself.

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